

THE YOUNG MISSOURIANS SERIES

THE SCOUT OF PEA RIDGE



BYRON A. DUNN



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THE YOUNG KENTUCKIANS
SERIES

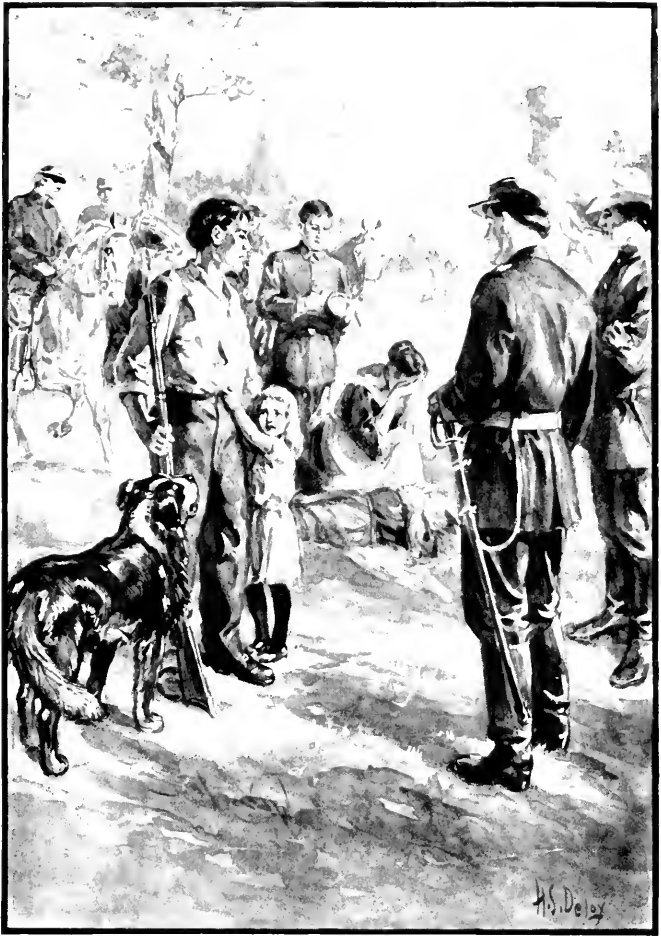
GENERAL NELSON'S SCOUT
ON GENERAL THOMAS'S STAFF
BATTLING FOR ATLANTA
FROM ATLANTA TO THE SEA
RAIDING WITH MORGAN

THE YOUNG MISSOURIANS
SERIES

WITH LYON IN MISSOURI
THE SCOUT OF PEA RIDGE

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The boy's eyes flashed as he stood clutching his rifle, looking upon the scene of death and destruction [Chapter XI]

THE SCOUT OF PEA RIDGE

BY

BYRON A. DUNN

AUTHOR OF "THE YOUNG KENTUCKIANS" SERIES

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS

BY H. S. DELAY



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*To the soldiers of the Army of the Southwest,—
who by their bravery defeated twice their number
at Pea Ridge, and thus brought to a successful
termination the great work which Lyon began,—
this volume is inscribed.*

PREFACE

DISASTER came swift and sure to the Union cause in Missouri after the lamentable death of General Nathaniel Lyon.

General Price swept clear up to the Missouri River with his army, capturing Lexington with over three thousand prisoners, and was allowed to escape unscathed.

In this book real history does not commence until the capture of Lexington by Major White. In this episode as well as in the brilliant charge of Fremont's Body Guard under the command of Major Zagonyi Lawrence and his troop personate an independent troop of cavalry called the Irish Dragoons, under the command of Captain Naughton.

In the charge on Springfield Captain Naughton lost his lieutenant and several of his men, but Major Zagonyi refused to acknowledge that Captain Naughton's company had any part in the charge, and a fierce controversy arose between the two.

In the advance into Arkansas, Lawrence's company is represented as a part of Major Bowen's

command; and at the battle of Pea Ridge, Lawrence takes the part of Bowen himself.

It may remain a doubt in the minds of our readers whether Guilford Craig was really killed at the battle of Pea Ridge. This at present is a mystery; in fact, is still a mystery in the mind of the author himself.

Perhaps the boys and girls who read this book can help him solve it.

B. A. D.

WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS.

August, 1911

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THE SCOUT OF PEA RIDGE

CHAPTER I

A MEETING WITH GRANT

AT the commencement of the mighty struggle between the North and the South, the city of St. Louis was the commercial metropolis of the West. At that time Kansas City was hardly more than a village. After the war began, St. Louis, from a commercial centre became a vast military depot. It was soldiers, soldiers, everywhere.

The presence of the soldiers could not, however, suppress the disloyal sentiment of the city. The great majority of the wealthier inhabitants were intensely Southern, and they took every occasion to show it, especially the ladies. They never lost an opportunity of showing their contempt for the hated Yankees; many a woman would sport a large Confederate rosette on her corsage, and for even the hem of her garment to brush a blue uniform was contamination.

It was early in October, in 1861, that a young lieutenant in Federal uniform was slowly walking down Olive Street. His pale and emaciated features showed that he had but recently arisen from a bed of sickness. In fact he had been dangerously wounded at the battle of Wilson Creek, and afterwards he had had a severe attack of fever. Now that he was able to walk he was eager to be in active service once more, and feeble as he was, he was on his way to General Fremont.

Lawrence Middleton, for that was the name of the young officer, was an orphan. His father, a minister, had been killed a few years before in the border warfare which raged between Kansas and Missouri. After the death of his father Lawrence had gone to live with an uncle in St. Louis. He was received kindly and treated as one of the family. But the breaking out of the war brought a great change. His uncle, one of the richest men in the city and a slave-owner, cast his fortune with the South, while Lawrence remained steadfast for the Union.

His uncle had a son, Edward, who was some three or four years older than Lawrence, and who was intensely Southern in his belief. He had always treated Lawrence as a brother, but when he found out that Lawrence had not espoused the cause of the South, but had actually joined one of the reg-

iments of Home Guards raised by Frank Blair, his anger knew no bounds, and he swore that Lawrence must leave the house, or he would.

Thus Lawrence was made an outcast. As the nephew of the rich Mr. Middleton, he had always associated with the most aristocratic people of St. Louis, and was everywhere a favorite. But he suddenly found himself an object of hatred and contempt, a miserable, despised Yankee. At first this was galling to his pride, but he bore it bravely, and soon learned not to let it trouble him.

When Lawrence first joined the Home Guards, he was made a lieutenant in one of the companies of the First Regiment, and when his uncle cast him off, Frank Blair made him his private secretary. Thus Lawrence found new and powerful friends, and in the exciting scenes through which he passed, did not miss that which he had lost.

About the time Lawrence was cast off by his uncle, one of his school mates, Guilford Craig, came to him. He was a silent, taciturn boy, and was thought to be a little queer. He rarely took part in any of the boyish sports and made few friends. Guilford had a step-brother Benton Shelley, who attended the same school. He was older than Guilford and of a domineering spirit, and it was evident there was little love lost between the brothers.

One day in a heated argument, Benton Shelley

called Lawrence a Lincolnite and a coward and was promptly knocked down. This made Benton swear undying enmity towards Lawrence.

A short time after the fight Guilford Craig came to Lawrence in secret, and thanked him for whipping his step-brother, saying he hated him, as well as his step-mother, and told the reason why.*

Guilford was naturally secretive and cunning, and he had brooded so long over the incident (which seemed to have warped his whole life) that he had become a monomaniac on the subject. He hated slavery as intensely as ever did John Brown.

Swearing Lawrence to secrecy, Guilford informed him that while apparently he was one of the most rabid of secessionists, he was for the North with his whole heart and soul, and that it was his intention to join Frost's militia and act as a spy. This he did, and he acted his part so well, that he became an orderly to General Frost; and after the capture of Camp Jackson, became a spy in the employ of General Sterling Price.

While orderly to General Frost he was enabled to gain the most valuable information, which he imparted to Lawrence, and through him to Lyon and Blair. It was through the information thus received that Blair and Lyon were enabled to thwart the most secret machinations of those who were trying to drag Missouri out of the Union.

*See "With Lyon in Missouri."

Lawrence had not seen his trusted ally since the battle of Wilson Creek, and as he walked along on his way to Fremont's headquarters he wondered what had become of him. "I am afraid," he sighed, "that Guilford and I will never again be as much service to the Union as we have been. Oh! that Lyon had lived." And his eyes filled with tears as he thought of his beloved commander.

Lawrence was now on one of the most fashionable streets of the city and met many that he knew. Boys with whom he had gone to school, and who had been proud of even a speaking acquaintance, now passed him with looks of hatred, and more than once words of bitter scorn and contempt were hurled at him. Ladies who had once petted him now ignored him, and held aside their skirts so that even the hem of their dresses might not touch him.

At one place a large United States flag hung over the sidewalk, and Lawrence smiled, as he noticed that every woman and girl whose heart was with the South walked around in the street rather than pass under it.

One lady richly dressed, gave her skirt a more vicious twitch than usual and actually spat at Lawrence in contempt as she passed him. "That's Mrs. Craig, Guilford's step-mother," laughed Lawrence to himself. "I reckon she has forgotten how I saved her life in the crush of the mob when

she was fleeing in terror from the vengeance, as she supposed, of Frank Blair's Dutch. Well, my lady, I am still alive, but no thanks to that precious son of yours."

Lawrence grew a trifle nervous as he noticed two young misses, about fourteen or fifteen years of age, coming down the sidewalk towards him. Both were fashionably dressed and both wore large Confederate rosettes, and the way they turned their pretty noses up when they passed one of the detested Yankees, was laughable. Lawrence did not care to meet them. He knew them well, one of them especially well. His first thought was to turn and avoid them, but no, that would be cowardly. So he passed them with head as high as their own, and without deigning to look at them.

"Mercy, Dorothy," laughed one of the girls, "did you notice that? He did n't even give us a chance to snub him. But he do n't look like himself, he is so pale and thin. They say he came nearly being killed in that dreadful battle near Springfield. I wish he had. It would pay him for turning Yankee, and I used to think he was such a nice boy. I heard father say his uncle had forgiven him for turning Yankee and taken him back into favor. I did n't think that of Mr. Middleton."

The girl addressed as Dorothy did not reply. In fact her mind seemed so preoccupied that she actu-

ally brushed against a soldier, and forgot to draw aside her skirt.

"Why, Dorothy Hamilton," prattled on her companion, "what's the matter? Oh! I know, you used to be kind of sweet on Lawrence Middleton. Think of turning Yankee yourself?"

Dorothy's eyes flashed. "Helen Southwick, if you value my friendship, never say such a thing again," she snapped. "I turn Yankee for Lawrence Middleton? I had rather die than turn Yankee for any one. I was thinking what a pity it was that Lawrence went with the North. Like you, I used to think he was a nice boy, but now I hate him. I not only hate him, I despise him. He was not satisfied with being a traitor to the South, but he had to insult me."

"Insult you, how? I always thought he was one of the most gentlemanly of boys," answered Helen.

Dorothy walked along a short distance without answering.

"Dorothy, why don't you tell me," persisted Helen. "I shall begin to think it was something awful."

"Well, it was this way. You know he and I used to be great friends, and when I heard he had turned Yankee I was all cut up. I met him on the street and told him never to speak to me again. Just before that I had met that spiteful little Lola

Laselle and told her our friendship was at an end. You know both her father and brother are for the Union."

"Yes," sighed Helen, "this war is making terrible havoc with old friendships. But why call Lola spiteful?"

"Never mind. When I met Lawrence and told him never to speak to me again, he did n't seem to be a bit taken back, but laughed and said, 'Why, Miss Dorothy, you seem to be going back on all your old friends. I met a little girl a few minutes ago crying bitterly because you had cut her cold.' 'I suppose you mean Lola Laselle,' I snapped. 'Of course you comforted her.' 'Why, sure I did,' he answered, 'I told her it was just jealousy on your part because she was better looking than you.'"

(Be it known that Dorothy Hamilton was called a very pretty girl.)

"Dorothy Hamilton, did he tell you that?" asked Helen with wide open eyes.

"Yes, he did. He had the audacity to tell me that."

"The mean thing, no wonder you hate him," answered Helen, but an amused smile played around her mouth as she said it.

"They do say," went on Dorothy, "that he and Lola are awful thick, but I do n't care. He is noth-

ing but a poor beggar anyway, dependent on the charity of his uncle."

But there was a queer little quiver in Dorothy's voice as she said this.

Helen stopped and looked at her companion curiously. "Dorothy Hamilton, I do believe you care for him," she exclaimed.

"Helen Southwick," cried Dorothy in a rage, stamping her little foot, "take care. What did I tell you? I tell you I hate him, but that can not make me forget that he once saved Randolph's life when those Dutch demons were about to stamp him to death. And then Lawrence is so brave, and I cannot help admiring bravery even in an enemy. You know if it had not been for him his cousin, Edward Middleton, would have been killed at Wilson Creek. And he saved Edward's life nearly at the expense of his own. Randolph wrote us all about it. He says it was one of the bravest and noblest acts he ever saw. Randolph likes him, but I hate him, oh! how I hate him!"

Helen wisely did not pursue the subject, but suddenly said, "Dorothy, here come two Yankee officers, regular dudes; let us show them how we despise them."

So the girls gave their skirts an extra twitch, and tilted their noses a little more skyward than usual. The officers smiled and one of them re-

marked, "There go two deuced pretty girls. They do n't hate a good looking Yankee half as much as they pretend. Pity they are not two or three years older. I would try to get an introduction."

"Little good it would do you," laughed the other. "I had as soon try and tame a wildcat as some of these Southern girls."

In the meantime Lawrence went on his way all unmindful that he was the topic of conversation between the two girls. His heart was rather sore, for say and act as we may, it is rather galling to our pride to have those with whom we once associated pass us by as strangers, even though we suffer for the most just of causes.

Lawrence had not gone far when to his surprise and delight he saw Guilford Craig coming towards him. That young gentleman did not seem to notice him, but as he passed Lawrence felt a scrap of paper pressed into his hand. After walking a few yards he glanced at it. All it said was, "Meet me to-night at nine o'clock at the old place. Be careful. Mistrust your own shadow."

"There must be danger ahead," thought Lawrence. "That is the reason he passed without recognizing me. I wonder what it can be, but Guilford makes no mistakes. I must be careful until I see him and learn what it is that threatens."

Thus thinking, Lawrence put the little scrap of

paper in his mouth, chewed it and threw it away. Then it came to him that it might have been unwise of him to read the slip so soon after Guilford had passed, but there was no help for it now, and he went on somewhat uneasy in mind.

He soon reached headquarters, where he found all bustle and excitement, for Fremont was to leave for Jefferson City in a couple of days to commence his forward movement against Price. Lawrence found the headquarters like a regal court. Officers glittering in gold lace were rushing here and there, and Lawrence had hard work to get past the guards, even into an outer waiting room.

How different from the headquarters of General Lyon, he thought, and tears came into his eyes as he remembered the fate of his loved general.

It was a long time that Lawrence had to wait, and he began to think he would never get an interview, when the door opened and Frank Blair came out from the presence of Fremont. Blair was accompanied by a short stocky man wearing a plain uniform, and the only badge of office he showed was a star which glittered on his shoulder.

Lawrence knew him at once. It was the man who had befriended him when he first landed in St. Louis a lonely, ragged, dirty, hungry boy. Just then Blair spied Lawrence and rushed up to him with extended hand.

“Lieutenant Middleton, as I live,” exclaimed Blair, giving Lawrence’s hand a warm shake. “My boy, I thought I had lost you, but I heard that your uncle had taken you in and cared for you. That will atone for many of his sins. But come, I want to introduce you to General Grant.”

Lawrence colored to the roots of his hair; it was an honor he did not expect. So it was General Grant who had befriended him.

“General,” said Blair, “this is Lieutenant Middleton, the young officer I have been telling you about. To no one were we so indebted as to him for information which thwarted the most secret machinations of Jackson and Frost. Not only this, but at Wilson Creek he proved a hero, and it was he who caught the gallant Lyon in his arms as he fell.”

“Indeed,” replied Grant reaching out his hand, “I am glad to meet Lieutenant Middleton.” Lawrence received a grasp of the hand so warm, so friendly that it thrilled him.

“I am more than glad to meet General Grant,” exclaimed Lawrence, “but, General, this is not our first meeting. I have met you once before and on that occasion you did me a great kindness, one I shall never forget, and one for which, until now, I have never been able to thank you.”

General Grant looked surprised. “I do not re-

member of ever having seen you before, young man," he replied.

"General, five years ago, a forlorn, dirty, ragged boy sat on the curbstone on this very street, crying as if his heart would break. He felt that he did not have a friend in the world. Hundreds passed him by unnoticed, but you in the kindness of your heart noticed him and asked him what was the matter. You took him for a newsboy. The little boy told you he wanted to find his uncle, and mentioned his name. You looked incredulous when you heard the name, but paid the street car fare to near where his uncle lived."

"Why, I remember that," replied Grant, "the boy was as disreputable-looking a specimen as I ever saw. I remember it because the man he said was his uncle was one of the richest and best known men in St. Louis. It is not possible you are that boy."

"I am that boy," answered Lawrence, "and now that I know it was you who befriended me, it has added to my happiness. I found my uncle, and he took me in and cared for me as a son until — until he knew I was Union, then he cast me off. But that has all been made up. We are friends once more."

Blair stood by, an interested listener. "General," he exclaimed, "that little act of kindness is just

like you, but that five cents has been worth millions to the Government."

"It was a little thing to do," replied Grant. "When I have more time I would like to hear from Lieutenant Middleton how he came to be in St. Louis in the condition I found him. But I must be going now."

"I shall expect to hear something good from you in your new command before long," said Blair as he shook hands with the General and bade him good-bye.

As Grant walked away Blair said, "Mark that man well, Lieutenant, for if I mistake not, he will be heard from before the war is over. He is now in command at Cairo."

With Blair as sponsor, Lawrence had no trouble in securing the coveted audience with Fremont. In a few words Blair explained to Fremont who Lawrence was and hinted that it might be to the advantage of the cause if he (Fremont) would give him the same position that he held under Lyon.

Fremont frowned and replied, "Impossible, as much as I would like to oblige you. My staff is fully made up, the chief of my scouts is giving satisfaction. In fact I get too much news. I hardly know which way to turn. Hell seems broken loose all over the State. The only thing I see for Lieutenant Middleton to do is to join his regiment."

Blair bit his lip. "General," he answered, "Lieutenant Middleton is too useful a man to be buried as a lieutenant in the army. Assign him to me on special duty. I will see that he has work to do."

"As you like," said Fremont, and the assignment was made.

When by themselves Blair said, "Lieutenant I am almost disheartened over the situation. Everything has gone wrong since Lyon was killed. To think of their letting Price reach the Missouri River and capture Lexington. Even after Lexington was captured, he could have been headed off, and his army annihilated, if proper generalship had been shown. The fact is, Fremont is scared to death over St. Louis, and he utterly fails to grasp the situation. He is not the man for the place. He is all for pomp and show, and believes himself to be the greatest general in the world. There is Grant, he is worth a hundred of him."

"Where is Price now?" asked Lawrence.

"Somewhere around Springfield. I wish we had Guilford Craig again. If we had we would know more about what Price is doing. I wonder what has become of Craig."

"I have an appointment to meet him at nine o'clock to-night," replied Lawrence.

"You have! Good!" exclaimed Blair. "That

is the best news I have heard for a long time. Report to me in the morning what he has to say; or, what may be better, bring him along. Come early as I may have to leave in the afternoon."

"I can hardly wait until evening to see him," said Lawrence. "There is something mysterious going on. He passed me on the street without noticing me, but pressed a slip of paper in my hand. It contained an appointment for to-night and then he added, 'Be careful, mistrust your own shadow.'"

"That must mean that you are in personal danger; you know how you are hated."

"It may," replied Lawrence, "but I will learn all when I see him. I will report as early as possible in the morning, General."

Blair stood and looked after him as he went his way. "What could Craig have meant," he muttered, "I have a mind to have Middleton guarded, he is too valuable a man to lose, but perhaps when he sees Craig all will be explained."

CHAPTER II

SHADOWED BY SPIES

LAURENCE left the headquarters of General Fremont downhearted and dispirited. It was evident he would never be to Fremont what he had been to Lyon. But could he expect it? At the beginning it was a battle of deceit, of treachery; a battle of master minds trying to over-reach each other in intrigue and statecraft. Now it was stern war. The days of diplomacy, of compromise, had passed. The appeal had been made to the god of war, and now the cannon and the musket would have to settle the question.

Under the changed conditions Lawrence felt he could never do for the Union as much as he had done. He would now be but one of thousands battling for the old flag.

He also felt that Guilford Craig could never again accomplish as much as he had. It would be more and more difficult for him to keep up his double role. General Price would expect him to find out all he could about the Federal army without giving any of his secrets in return. Yes, he felt

General Fremont was right, his place was with his regiment.

To pass away the time Lawrence walked down to the levee. It was a busy scene he looked upon. Scores of steamboats lay for miles up and down the river. Huge piles of military stores encumbered the levee, enough it seemed to feed a nation for years. Regiments were marching aboard the boats on their way down the river. Cairo was thought to be in danger, and Grant was being reinforced. Officers were shouting themselves hoarse. Hundreds of black stevedores were rushing around loading and unloading the boats, and the air was full of profanity. To the spectator it seemed a babel of confusion—a great ant hill with human beings as the ants, and in those days human life was of little more value than the ant's.

Lawrence turned from the scene with a sigh. Since his convalescence, he had learned that things were not going well in Missouri. Most all that Lyon had gained had been lost. General Price had swept clear up to the Missouri River, capturing Lexington with Mulligan's entire command. The whole State was over-run with desultory bands of Confederates making war on their Union neighbors. From every county came stories of pillage and murder. And yet this was but the beginning.

Lawrence went back to his uncle's and impatiently

waited for the time to come for him to meet Guilford Craig. The night proved dark and cloudy, and the flickering street lamps gave but a dim light. So much the better, thought Lawrence for his meeting with Guilford, yet he could hardly see the cause for so much secrecy.

But he would have been startled if he had known that as he left his uncle's house a man who had been lurking on the other side of the street, stealthily followed him. All unconscious of being shadowed he went straight to the place of rendezvous, and reached it just as the clock was striking nine. Guilford had not put in an appearance and Lawrence waited in silence, his back close to the wall. So dark was it that one might have passed along the walk and never noticed him. He had been there but a moment when the dim figure of a man slowly slouched by, apparently not seeing him. But after the man had passed and the darkness had completely hid him, Lawrence no longer heard his footsteps and he thought it curious.

A few minutes afterwards a young man came along walking briskly. As he passed Lawrence, he whispered, "You are watched. Follow me. Be careful."

It was the voice of Guilford Craig. Wondering, Lawrence followed after him, a few paces in the rear. When they came where the light of a street

lamp fell on Guilford, Lawrence saw that he was in his old disguise, and that he must be addressed as Charles Morris.

Lawrence was now all alert. There was something more afoot than he had been aware of. He had not gone far when he became convinced someone was shadowing him. Glancing back he caught sight of a stealthy figure who seemed to be following him, but he had no time to investigate, for Guilford kept straight on until he came to a well lighted street where he halted, apparently to gaze into a show window.

“Do n’t speak to me or look at me,” whispered Guilford. “Go straight home, and I will meet you as soon as I think safe at the rear entrance to your uncle’s lot. Go boldly as if you suspected nothing.”

Mystified, Lawrence walked on still leaving Guilford gazing at the window. Why was he shadowed? Lawrence could not imagine, but shadowed he was. He glanced back. The man he had suspected of following him had passed Guilford.

“Now I know what Guilford is up to,” thought Lawrence. “He wants to follow the fellow and find out who he is.” Thus thinking, Lawrence went straight home, but passed through the house into the back yard. The lot on which his uncle’s house was built was a large one, extending from one street to another. On the back street was an entrance

which led to the stables. Lawrence saw to it that the gate was unfastened and then sat down to wait for his friend.

It seemed to him he had waited a long time, and he began to think Guilford was not coming when the gate was gently shaken. He sprang up and opened it and Guilford entered.

"Let us get where we cannot be heard," Guilford whispered. "Even walls have ears. I am not sure but I believe I have been followed here, or that the house is being watched from all sides. There is trouble brewing."

Lawrence locked the gate and led Guilford back to a rustic seat under a tree. All around was thick darkness.

"Now, I think we are safe from being overheard," said Lawrence. "No one can scale the fence without the aid of a ladder. Now tell me what has happened. In the name of Heaven, why are we hounded by so many spies?"

"I am not certain of my ground yet," answered Guilford, "but I believe I am in more danger than you."

"You!" exclaimed Lawrence in surprise, "then why shadow me? Did you find out who was shadowing me?"

"Yes, it was Tom Stone."

"Why, I hardly know him."

"But Bent knows him well. I have a surprise for you. Bent is in the city."

Lawrence nearly sprang to his feet in surprise. "Bent in the city!" he exclaimed in consternation. "Then he must be here as a spy."

"Yes, and he seems to have let loose a herd of other spies upon us," answered Guilford. "I remained at the window, confident I would not be recognized in my disguise, to see if I could recognize the person shadowing you. As I told you, it was Tom Stone. He followed you clear home. Just here he was joined by Jerry Alcorn and Alf Sevier."

"Alf Sevier! Great Heavens! He lives right opposite," exclaimed Lawrence.

"Yes, and you may be sure you do not make a move without he knows it. As I was saying, Tom Stone followed you here. When Jerry and Alf came up, the three held a consultation. Then Jerry went one way and Tom another, and Alf went into the house, no doubt to watch from there whether you came out or not. I have no doubt that either Tom or Jerry is watching the rear; and if so, it is known that someone is in here with you. But thanks to my disguise, it will keep them guessing who it is."

"But why all this spying on me?" asked Lawrence. "It looks as if I were the one they were

after, and yet you say you are in more danger than I am."

"Listen, and you will know," said Guilford. "I only arrived in the city yesterday. Of course I went straight home. The first chance she got, Molly, one of the house servants whispered to me that Bent was at home. Had been for two or three days, but that he kept secreted, and that even my father did not know he was here. Molly is my friend, all the house servants are, but they all hate Bent. There is not a secret of the house but what they tell me. Molly says that my stepmother was greatly terrified when she first saw Bent, for he came disguised. Molly says he only comes home at night and then only for a short time. No doubt he is in some secret hiding place. The city is full of these secret meeting places of Rebels, and you may be sure Bent is at the bottom of this spying business. When I left Price's camp he was still there, but he must have left soon after I did. He beat me to the city by three or four days, because I had to go out of my way to deliver messages."

"But I am still in the dark as to the reason for this spying on me," said Lawrence.

"I am coming to that," answered Guilford. "Just as I was starting on my trip here and General Price was giving me my last instructions, I heard a conversation which set me thinking. Governor

Jackson and General Frost were present, and in their conversation I heard your name mentioned."

"My name?" exclaimed Lawrence.

"Yes, it seems they had heard you still lived, and were lamenting the fact. 'He did more damage than an army,' I heard Jackson say. You may believe I opened my ears then. It seems that in some manner they had found out that it was you who had revealed their most secret plans to Lyon and Blair. And they declared that if it had not been for you they would have been successful in carrying the State out of the Union.

"'But,' exclaimed Frost with a bitter oath, 'he must have had an accomplice, for young Middleton, as far as I know never played the spy. No, he had a confederate, and one who must have been close to us to have found out what he did. I would give ten years of my life to spot the traitor.'

"'How about his uncle?' asked Jackson.

"'I know Alfred Middleton well,' replied Frost. 'And I do not believe that for a moment he would play a double part. He is the soul of honor. Then there was information furnished of which he knew nothing. The one who gave the information was much closer' to us than Alfred Middleton, Governor. There was information furnished that I thought not more than half a dozen of us knew. The question is, who is the traitor?'

“General Price now took a hand in the conversation. ‘It was not only before Camp Jackson was taken, but afterwards there has been something wrong,’ he said. ‘Many of the despatches which I have sent only to those I trust have found their way into the hands of the Federals, and yet as far as I know every one of those despatches was delivered to those for whom they were intended. I tell you there is a traitor high up somewhere.’

“The General then turned to me and said, ‘Craig, you have shown yourself a valuable and trustworthy agent, alert and cautious. Not once have you failed me. Now in addition to what I have given you I add a delicate and difficult matter. When you get to St. Louis I want you to spy on young Middleton. Get all the help you want, you can find it. Do not let him make a move you do not know. In this way you may be able to find out who his confederate is.’

“You can imagine what my feelings were as I received this order, but I bowed, thanked him for the trust reposed in me, and said I would do my very best.

“As I turned to go out, I came face to face with Bent. You know he is on the staff of General Price now. He merely nodded, and I saw a look in his face which I did not like, a look which seemed to say, ‘The fools to trust him with such a mission.’

For I am sure he had heard every word the General said to me.

“I lost no time in leaving camp. For some reason I felt the quicker I went the better, and now I find Bent here in St. Louis doing the very thing General Price commanded me to do, only I find he is spying on us both. I believe Bent had a say after I left, and his being here in St. Louis bodes me no good. Of one thing you can be assured, I shall not put myself in the hands of General Price again until I know how the land lays.”

“Do you think Benton would betray you if he had a chance?” asked Lawrence.

“Betray me! He would rejoice at the opportunity,” replied Guilford bitterly. “With me out of the way his mother would get around father and see that he inherited all the property. For years she has been hoping that in some manner my life might be cut off. She has told me more than once that she did n’t see why I could n’t have died when my mother did. One reason she hated Susan so is because she took such good care of me. Poor Susan.” Tears came into Guilford’s eyes and his voice broke as he pronounced her name.

“But Benton is now in your power,” said Lawrence. “It is he who has put his head in the lion’s mouth. Let me denounce him as a spy, and you know what will follow.”

Guilford shuddered. "As much as I hate him, I would not want you to do that," he answered.

"But he is a spy. It is my duty to denounce him. If the provost marshal knew he was here, he would not rest a moment before he would have him arrested."

"As to his being a spy," said Guilford, "St. Louis is full of spies. All the harm Bent can do is to myself."

"Do you think Benton has any suspicions you are the one who gave me my information?" asked Lawrence.

"He must, or he would not have followed me so closely, and set his horde of spies watching you. The least word of his to Price would have made the General suspicious."

Both of the boys were silent for a moment, and then Lawrence said, "Guilford, I saw Blair to-day, and I told him I had seen you and had an engagement to meet you this evening. He was more than pleased and told me to see him in the morning, and if possible bring you. If it were not prudent for you to come, to learn all I could from you, and tell him. Guilford, how can we deceive him? He should, must know all."

"Then Bent —" Guilford stopped abruptly.

"Then what?" asked Lawrence.

"Oh, nothing, I was thinking. I reckon you are

right, Lawrence. Yes, Blair will have to be told. But something may happen before morning. I had best go now. I will see you early in the morning and we will lay our plans."

"Do n't go yet," said Lawrence. "Tell me something about yourself. Remember I have not seen you since before the battle of Wilson Creek. I got the message you dropped the day before the battle and gave it to Lyon. He resolved to do the attacking, and you know the result."

"Yes, and if Lyon had not been killed, I believe he would have won a great victory. You actually had McCulloch and Price whipped when the battle ended. A few well directed shells would have stampeded the whole army. But, say, what a figure Sigel cut. I am disappointed in the man."

"So am I," said Lawrence, "grievously disappointed. He has done a noble work, but as a general he failed lamentably. But go on."

"After the withdrawal of your force from the field, I heard Bent boasting he had killed you, killed you in the act of saving your cousin. For a moment I lost my head and was about to spring on him and kill him regardless of consequences. But I controlled myself by a powerful effort and turned away. But I believe Bent began to suspect me then and there.

"Edward, Randolph Hamilton and myself thor-

oroughly searched the field, but not finding your dead body, we began to hope you had only been wounded instead of being killed. Such I am rejoiced to find was the case.

“After the battle General Price was crazy to pursue your retreating army, but McCulloch would not hear of it. It was fortunate for you that Price did not have his way, for I believe if there had been a vigorous pursuit your whole army would have been captured. But that did not happen, thanks to McCulloch.

“I was then sent north with despatches and letters from General Price, saying he was to make a move as far north as the Missouri River.

“I warned the Federal generals, but they gave little heed or were too slow, and you know the result. Price captured Lexington and is now slowly falling back on Springfield. General Fremont is no good. He means well and that is the best I can say.

“There was a little general in command at Jefferson City that did things. He brought order out of chaos in a short time. If he had been left there I believe he would have captured Price and his army before they could have got back, but he was transferred to Cairo, I believe. His name is Grant.”

“I met him to-day,” exclaimed Lawrence. “Blair speaks highly of him. He befriended me when I first landed in St. Louis, a friendless, homeless boy.”

“Well, I believe if he was in Fremont’s place there would be things doing. But I have already talked too long, I must be going. I have much to think of before I see you again.”

“Are you not afraid you will be shadowed?” asked Lawrence.

“I trust such will be the case,” answered Guilford, much to Lawrence’s surprise.

Lawrence walked to the gate to let him out. As he did so Guilford whispered, “If nothing happens to-night, and you do not hear from me in the morning before you meet Blair tell him to hold his hand. It is much more important that I should find out just what Benton is up to, than that he should be arrested as a spy.”

The darkness swallowed Guilford up, but as it did so, Lawrence was certain he heard a rustling close to the wall and then stealthy footsteps following after Guilford. His first impulse was to follow, but he muttered, “No, it is better as it is.” And locking the gate he retired to the house and to bed, but not to sleep. He lay awake a long time thinking of Guilford and of the future.

CHAPTER III

UNDER WHICH FLAG?

HAD Guilford Craig known what had transpired at the headquarters of General Price after he left he would have had good reason for his fears. Well for him he got away as soon as he did, or his career might have ended then and there by his being executed as a traitor.

His step-brother glowered at him as he passed out, and then turned and saluted the General.

"Ah! here is Lieutenant Shelley," said the General. "Perhaps he can throw some light on the subject, as I understand he knows Middleton well. In fact, Shelley, if you had shot a little better, there would be no Lieutenant Middleton to discuss now."

"Curse him," replied Benton. "I thought I had finished him, but I will try to shoot straighter next time. But what of him? What has he been doing now?"

"Sit down, Lieutenant, and we will tell you. As far as we know he has been doing nothing, lately. Your shot has kept him quiet for the past two months, but we have received positive proof that it

was he who furnished Lyon and Blair with the information which made all our plans to take Missouri out of the Union fail."

"Yes," spoke up Frost, "in some manner he became possessed of our most carefully guarded plans. How did he get them? The General and I have come to the conclusion he must have had a confederate, one very close to us. You attended the same school that he did, did you not?"

"Yes."

"Who were his closest chums?"

"Well, I must say," answered Benton, "he was always a popular boy. One well liked by all of us, until we found out he was a Lincolnite, then of course we cut him. I was one of the first to find out he was a traitor to the South, and I accused him of it and we quarrelled. Since that time we have been sworn enemies."

"At that time did any of the boys side with Middleton?" asked General Price.

"At first, yes, because they would not believe he was a Lincolnite; when they found out, no."

"Do you believe that Middleton himself could have found out all that he did?" asked Frost.

"Candidly no. He must have had a confederate," was the answer.

"Then it remains for us to find the traitor," exclaimed Frost, bringing his fist down on the table

with a tremendous whack. "And we have already begun an investigation which may result in unravelling the mystery."

"Pardon me," replied Benton, "but just as I came in I met my step-brother, Guilford Craig, going out, and from what General Price said I imagine he was sent on a secret mission of trying to find out the source of Lawrence Middleton's information."

"Yes," answered General Price, "your step-brother has proven one of my most valuable spies, especially in getting messages back to our friends in the State. He never fails to deliver them."

"Can you trust me with the full details of what you propose my step-brother shall do? Believe me, this is no idle question asked out of mere curiosity," said Benton.

"There is no reason but that we can trust you," answered General Price, and he gave the full details of the plans as outlined to Guilford.

Benton remained silent for some time. His face twitched, and he seemed to be struggling with some great emotion. At length he raised his eyes and said very slowly as if each word were an effort. "Was — it — wise — to — send — my — step-brother — on — such — a — mission?"

"What!" exclaimed General Price in astonishment.

“What!” echoed General Frost, his face pale as ashes.

“You do n’t mean to charge your step-brother with this infamous crime, do you?” asked General Price. “He is my most trusted spy.”

“And he was my orderly at Camp Jackson,” exclaimed Frost.

“Which means that he had unusual opportunities for gaining information,” answered Benton.

The two generals could only stare at each other. Then Price cried out in fury, “If you knew this why did you not inform me? If I find out Guilford Craig is a traitor, and you knew or even suspected it and kept silent, I will hang you with him.”

Benton turned pale. He realized he might have been too abrupt. Collecting himself, he said, “General, if my death will bring victory to our beloved cause hang me at once. But do you realize what a serious thing it would be for me to cast suspicion on my step-brother, if I had not, at least, some evidence?”

“Then you have no evidence that he is a traitor?”

“Not the slightest. It is only a suspicion that has been growing in my mind since the battle at Oak Hill. That suspicion was strengthened just now, as he looked at me as he passed out.”

“Explain yourself, what did you see in his face

as he went out?" exclaimed Price a little petulantly.

"A look of exultation, of cunning, of devilishness, I might say."

"So you base your suspicions on a mere look, do you? Nothing more tangible?"

"Nothing more at present; but gentlemen, believe me, nothing would have induced me to say what I have, if I had not learned that you had sent Guilford on an important mission which would but play into his hands, if my suspicions are correct. May God grant they are unfounded, although he and I are in a certain sense enemies, at least not friends."

The generals looked at each other. The same thought had come to both. Was Benton Shelley making a charge against his step-brother on account of enmity?

"Perhaps I had better make plain what I meant by being enemies," continued Benton. "We have not quarrelled since we were small boys. My mother married Mr. Craig when Guilford was about six years old. His mother had died when he was a mere infant, and up to the time of my mother's marriage he had been cared for by a black mammy. He was a puny, sickly child and never cared to play with other children. He was also of a sly secretive nature. When my mother married Mr. Craig, Guilford's mammy conceived the idea that I

had come into the family to supplant "her honey," as she called Guilford, and her conduct became so intolerable that Mr. Craig was forced to sell her. Guilford's fury, young as he was, knew no bounds. He blamed mother and me for his mammy being sold and from that time I know he has hated us both with his entire nature. As he grew older I noticed he grew more sly and secretive. When not in school he passed most of his time in reading. He seemed to be very fond of reading stories of intrigue or adventure. He never took any interest in our political discussions, until there was talk of war, and then it was as if he had been suddenly transformed. No one could surpass him in the denunciation of the hated Yankees.

"You know how active he was, General," said Benton, turning to Frost, "before and at Camp Jackson."

Frost nodded and said, "Go on."

"After the capture of Camp Jackson," continued Benton, "Guilford signified his intention of becoming a spy, and we all opposed him. His father told him there was neither honor nor glory in it, and probably the end would be a dishonored death. But he was determined. Said it did him more good to fool a Yankee than it did to kill him. It was not until after the battle of Oak Hill that I had the least suspicion he was acting a part. Some of the boys

were congratulating me on the charge I made which resulted in the rescue of Lieutenant Edward Middleton, and the death of Lawrence Middleton, supposedly by my hand. Guilford just then came up, and when he heard I had slain that arch traitor in honorable combat, a look of tigerish ferocity came in his face, and I thought he was going to spring on me and try to throttle me. But he pulled himself together, and walked away without saying a word. Then of all the boys in school I remembered Guilford was the only one that had never denounced Lawrence Middleton for turning traitor to the South, and it set me thinking. Just now when I passed him and saw the look of triumph on his face — a look I cannot explain, but which seemed to say, ‘I will yet tramp you and all that you love into hell,’ I felt that slight as the grounds are in which my suspicions rest, it was my duty to let you know. This I will say of Guilford, he is as sly and cunning as the devil.”

Benton Shelley had succeeded in presenting a good case, holding back his own deplorable conduct, and the part he had in getting rid of Guilford's mammy.

After Benton had finished, General Price called an orderly, spoke a few words, and then he, Governor Jackson and General Frost held a whispered consultation.

In a few minutes the orderly returned and reported that Guilford Craig had already gone; that he had told the Officer of the Day that he had important despatches to deliver, and to give him the swiftest horse in camp.

General Price frowned. At any other time he would have complimented Guilford on his promptness. Turning to Benton, he said, "I thank you, Lieutenant, for telling us your suspicions. Yet on the slight evidence you present, I cannot say that Guilford is a traitor. But it is of the utmost importance to us that we know above all suspicion under which flag he trains. He now carries despatches which may prove my ruin if they fall into the hands of the enemy. What do you suggest?"

Benton remained in deep thought for a moment, and then said, "General, I have a request to make."

"What is it?" asked the general.

"That you let me follow Guilford to St. Louis, and see that he is faithfully following out your instructions. It will not take long to decide under which flag he serves."

"Lieutenant, do you know what you ask?" exclaimed the General. "If recognized you would be arrested, tried and executed as a spy."

"I am well aware of that," replied Benton, "but you must remember that once in St. Louis I will be among friends. Friends that will conceal me, carry

out my wishes and if need be defend me at the peril of their lives. I am more than anxious to make the trial."

"Go, then," replied the General. "I sincerely hope your suspicions will prove groundless; but whatever your report is, when you return, you will be Captain, not Lieutenant Shelley."

Benton bowed low. "How can I thank you, General," he exclaimed. "I only hope I shall merit the honor; and here let me say, none will rejoice more than I if I find Guilford faithfully carrying out your orders, and that my suspicions are groundless."

But in his heart of hearts Benton Shelley, above all things, wished to prove his step-brother a traitor. It would gratify his secret hatred of years, and mean honor and advancement in the army.

It was easy work for Benton Shelley to make his way to St. Louis. He avoided the places held by the Federals, and was among friends all the way. When a few miles from the city he left his horse with a well known secessionist to be concealed and cared for until his return. Among the farmers living near St. Louis there were any number who professed loyalty, but at heart were rank secessionists. With one of these, Benton, disguised as a young farmer, had no trouble in entering the city. Presenting himself at the rear door of his step-father's resi-

dence he asked if they needed any fresh vegetables; and when told to begone, he gave the servant a card demanding that she take it to her mistress at once.

Struck by his tone of authority the servant obeyed, and in a moment came hurrying back with the message that her mistress would see him immediately. He was led into the library where the servant was dismissed by Mrs. Craig, and in a moment mother and son were in each other's arms.

As soon as Mrs. Craig could command her voice, she cried sobbing, "Oh, Benton, Benton, I am glad to see you. But why did you come? Why did you come?"

"Glad to see me, mother, and yet sorry that I came. Why, mother?"

"The danger, Benton, the danger. What if you should be discovered?" and Mrs. Craig shuddered at the thought.

"Be careful, mother, and there will be no danger. You know there are hundreds of places in St. Louis where I can hide. At present it is best that father [Benton called Mr. Craig father] should not know I am here. I shall see you often, but I shall stay at one of the secret places of the boys."

"But, Benton, why did you come? Why incur this danger? I fear, I fear."

Benton told his mother all and then asked if Guilford was in the city.

"No," was the answer. "He is here very little. Absent weeks at a time. His father is much distressed. He says he expects to hear every day that Guilford has been arrested by the Yankees, and executed as a spy."

"If he is executed, I am thinking it will be by Price and not by Fremont," said Benton.

"It can't be possible that Guilford can be a Yankee spy," said Mrs. Craig. "I can believe most anything of him, but not that."

"Mother, have you not often heard him say he hated slavery? Remember how sly and cunning he is. Remember that he hates us both."

"But the disgrace, Benton. The disgrace. It would kill his father."

"His father has never shown any great interest in him," replied Benton dryly. "With him out of the way —"

"Benton, don't say that," cried his mother. "I can't bear it. If he were killed in battle I would shed no tears, but this is awful. Why did you enlist in such a thing, Benton?"

Mrs. Craig was not an entirely bad woman. She was selfish and cruel, but not criminal.

"Mother, listen," said Benton. "If Guilford is innocent no harm will come. If he is guilty he deserves to pay the penalty of his crime. But for him, or for some other person, Missouri would now be

safely out of the accursed Union. It is absolutely necessary for the success of our cause that this person, this infamous traitor be caught. Think of the honor that will come to me, if I am successful. General Price has already promised me a captaincy. If I succeed in unravelling this mystery, when the war is over and the South is free, I may come back a general. Who knows, mother." And Benton drew himself proudly up.

The mother through her tears looked fondly upon him. "I hope you will succeed, Benton. But I trust you will find that Guilford is not the guilty party. I cannot bear the thought that you should be the one who would send my husband's son to the gallows."

"He is none of our breed," said Benton coldly. "It is my duty to find the traitor, whoever he may be, and I shall find him if I can."

"Benton, I shall not sleep a wink as long as you are in the city," sobbed his mother wringing her hands. "Do give this up and get away as soon as you can."

"Mother, I would be everlastingly disgraced if I did. No, the die is cast. I must go and lay my plans. I will see you again to-morrow, if possible. Until then good-bye." He kissed her and was gone.

Mrs. Craig sat a long time a prey to her thoughts after Benton had left. A terror that he might be

detected gripped her heart. And Guilford — many a time she had wished him dead, that her son might inherit the property; but now to have it come this way! She shuddered and prayed he might be innocent. She thought of her cruelty, of Guilford's agony over the whipping and selling of his mammy. Perhaps she had helped make him what he was. She tried to excuse herself. Were not slaves born to be whipped and sold? But the iron had entered her soul.

There were yet in St. Louis quite a number of Frost's old State militia who had not gone to join Price's army. Benton hunted up one by the name of Jerry Alcorn. He had been a member of the police force, as well as one of Frost's most valuable lieutenants. To Jerry Benton confided his mission, merely keeping back that it was his step-brother he suspected. It would be time enough for them to know that if his suspicions proved correct.

Jerry entered into the plot with his whole heart. Benton was to keep concealed, while he would organize a gang to shadow every movement of Lawrence. Jerry did his work well, and soon had a force of a dozen enthusiastic daring young fellows. Three or four of them lived close to Lawrence's uncle, so they could watch from their own homes without fear of detection.

For four days Lawrence had been watched and

nothing had been discovered. Then Guilford Craig put in an appearance. He brought many letters from the boys in Price's army to friends and relatives in St. Louis. One was from Benton to his mother. Mrs. Craig took the letter with trembling hands. Could this boy who was risking so much be a traitor?

Guilford in the eyes of the aristocratic Southern element of St. Louis was looked upon as a hero. Benton found this out, and knew he must be careful. Not a lisp of whom he expected to catch. He cautioned his mother to be discreet.

Guilford was no sooner in the city than Benton knew it. He was exultant. Now he would soon know. He cautioned Jerry to be unusually watchful. Not the slightest movement of Lawrence must go unobserved.

So it was that the morning that Lawrence went to General Fremont's headquarters and met Guilford Craig, a spy was close by his side. The spy noticed that the two did not speak as they passed, but Guilford had made a slight movement as if he had pressed something in Lawrence's hand. The spy was a young man called Dickey Holbrook. Lawrence Middleton did not know him, but Guilford did.

"Hello, Dickey," said Guilford.

"Hello, Guilford, you back? Glad to see you.

Would like to talk to you, but I am in a big hurry now. Will see you again."

Guilford looked after him suspiciously. Dicky was a great talker and Guilford thought he would have difficulty in getting away from him. "Never knew him to refuse to talk before," he muttered.

A moment afterwards Dickey noticed that Lawrence was looking at a scrap of paper. After glancing at it a moment he put it in his mouth and chewed it up.

"Ah! it must be something secret," thought Dickey.

It was impossible for Dickey to follow Lawrence into the Headquarters of General Fremont so he had to wait until Lawrence came out. But the rest of the day until evening gave no results.

When Dickey reported he said, "Of course it could not have been Guilford who gave it to him, but the movement was a little suspicious."

A look of triumph came over Benton's face. He was on the right track. But he remarked, "I cannot conceive of Guilford being a traitor, but I should not spare even him if guilty. Thank you, Dickey, for your close observation." He gave orders that during the rest of the evening they must be doubly vigilant.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNKNOWN

ONE thing Guilford Craig had made up his mind to do, and that was in some way to warn Benton Shelley of his danger and have him flee the city before morning. He saw how impossible it was that Lawrence should see Blair and not tell him of Benton's presence. Lawrence was a soldier, his duty was plain.

All the time Guilford was talking to Lawrence he was formulating a plan whereby Benton could be warned, suspicion turned from himself, and Benton still be left in the dark as to who the real traitor was. He had little hope that his former relations with General Price could ever be re-established, but he would like to leave the Confederate authorities guessing.

Guilford had become convinced that even with all his caution he had been shadowed and that the rear of Mr. Middleton's house was being as carefully watched as the front. When Lawrence let him in at the gate, he was sure he saw a skulking figure across the street, and he had no doubt that as he

and Lawrence talked, someone was lying close to the wall trying to catch a word of their conversation.

Guilford believed, whoever it was, that his disguise would protect him, and that the spy would be completely in the dark as to who he was. Thus thinking he was in hopes the spy would follow him. If he does, thought he, I will give him the surprise of his life.

So when Guilford left Lawrence he made no effort toward concealment but walked away as careless as if he had not an enemy in the world. As he expected he had not gone far before some one was dogging his footsteps. It was now for him to find out who it was. This Guilford accomplished by taking to a well lighted street.

“Good, it’s Dickey Holbrook,” he laughed to himself. “It will not be hard work to scare Dickey into fits. He will tell everything he knows at the sight of a pistol.”

Holbrook was a blatant loud-mouthed fellow, who, to hear him talk one would think had a live Yankee for breakfast every morning, but Guilford knew him to be a coward at heart and that it would take a corporal’s guard to drag him into the army.

But unknown to Guilford there was another one on his trail, Jerry Alcorn. Jerry kept some little distance in the rear of Holbrook, and so Guilford did

not notice him. This was to result in Guilford's undoing.

Coming to a favorable spot, Guilford suddenly quickened his step and turning a corner dashed into an alley. Here he stood, waiting, revolver in hand. Holbrook, turning the corner and not seeing Guilford broke into a run, lest he might lose him. As Holbrook passed the alley he was halted by a revolver being thrust in his face.

"Hands up!" demanded a deep voice. "A cry and you die."

Dickey's hands went up with a jerk and he stood, his teeth chattering with fear.

"Why do you follow me?" asked Guilford savagely.

"I — I — a-am — not — following you," stammered Dickey, his voice trembling so he could hardly get out the words.

"You lie. Another falsehood and I fire."

"Do n't, do n't fire. I will tell the truth. Before God I will."

"You had better, but not so loud. Now, who set you on my trail?"

"Lieutenant Shelley. He —"

"Enough, I know all," broke in Guilford. "He got you to shadow Lawrence Middleton and then everyone with whom he talked."

"Y-e-s. That 's it."

“Go tell Benton Shelley that Lawrence Middleton knows that he is in the city, and that if he is not away before morning he will be arrested and hung as a spy. Tell him further that he is a fool; that by his unjust suspicions he has placed his step-brother Guilford Craig, in as great danger as himself; that he has rendered it impossible for Craig to maintain his present relations with General Price and thus has destroyed his usefulness. Tell him it is the “Unknown” who warns him. That if he values his life to flee the city at once. Now go. Do n’t look back.”

Dickey went down the street like a streak.

Guilford chuckled as he looked after him. “Reckon that will keep them guessing for a while. Now for the next act.”

But the next act was not to go as smoothly for Guilford as he thought.

When Dickey Holbrook turned the corner to follow Guilford, Jerry Alcorn was but a short distance behind, but just then a squad of soldiers came along with a prisoner who was hanging back and protesting loudly that they had made a mistake. That he was a good Union man, and to prove it he would hurrah for Abe Lincoln.

“Prove nothing,” growled the corporal in charge.

“I think this will quicken your steps,” and he pricked him with his bayonet.

The man howled in pain and yelled, "Cuss old Abe. Hurrah for Jeff Davis."

Jerry halted a moment to see what would happen. It was not long he tarried, but long enough to give Guilford time for his meeting with Dickey. So when Jerry turned the corner all he saw was the dim figure of Dickey fleeing down the street and the person he was following standing looking after him.

Jerry stopped suddenly for he was almost certain he caught the glint of a revolver as the man placed it in his pocket. Doing so, the man turned as if to retrace his steps, and Jerry had just time to dodge back around the corner and into a doorway when Guilford appeared. He stood a moment with the light shining full upon him, then with quickened steps went up the street.

Jerry took a chew of tobacco in his perplexity. "Do n't know just what to do," he said to himself. "I had a good look at the feller, and blamed if I ever saw him before. Who in the deuce is he, and what did he do to Dickey? They must have met. But Dickey is n't hurt sure. So I reckon the best thing I can do is to follow this guy. I can hear Dickey's story afterwards."

Jerry followed carefully after Guilford, but took the precaution of going on the opposite side of the street. If the man was desperate and carried a weapon, he did not care to meet him.

Guilford, pleased with the result of his encounter with Dickey Holbrook, forgot his usual caution, and thinking he had disposed of the person following him, went straight home, walked up the steps as if he owned the place, and opening the door with a key passed in.

For a moment Jerry stared in amazement, and was on the point of crying out, "Thieves — robbers." But he stopped suddenly, and gave a low whistle. There flashed through his mind the suspicion that Guilford Craig had given Lawrence the note Stone saw him reading. Could Guilford be the traitor? But this was not Guilford Craig! Still, it was someone who seemed very much at home in that house.

"Blame funny," he said to himself. "I reckon the best thing I can do, is to report this thing to Benton at once. This gets me! Tracking the suspect to Amos Craig's house."

Jerry lost no time in getting back to the rendezvous of the gang. He found everyone in the highest state of excitement. Dickey, breathless, pale and still trembling with fear had arrived and made his report. Benton was both dumbfounded and frightened.

"And he gave no name but 'The Unknown,'" asked Benton.

"None, but he must have been a friend of yours,

for he seemed to be greatly alarmed about your safety."

"And he called me a fool."

"Yes, said that by your suspicions, you had not only imperilled your own life, but the life of your step-brother as well. What did he mean?"

"It means that someone is on to the whole affair," replied Benton.

"Bent, you must heed the warning. You must go," cried the whole company.

"To be hanged as a spy is not pleasant to contemplate," replied Benton. "If I were to face death in battle I would face it a thousand times rather than run away and leave this mystery unsolved. Curses on Lawrence Middleton. The Unknown could not have been he, could it?"

"Hardly," answered one of the company. "After you came so near killing him, I do n't think he would put himself out to save you from the rope."

Just then Jerry came in and looked around on the excited group, in astonishment. Then seeing Dickey, he cried, "Dickey, you here? What has happened? I saw you running away from that fellow as if death was after you. Did he hold you up?"

Dickey's story was again told.

"Bent, I followed that fellow straight to your

father's house," said Jerry, "and he opened the door and went in as if he was at home."

At this the wonder and excitement grew.

"The Unknown must be Guilford," cried some.

"It was not Guilford I followed," replied Dickey stoutly.

"The person who went into Mr. Craig's house did not look like Guilford," said Jerry. "But —" He stopped and looked at Benton.

"Tell what you think," said Benton.

"Boys, this thing is as plain as the nose on a man's face," replied Jerry. "I wonder you can not see it. Guilford Craig is the traitor and the Unknown. The reason we did not know him was he was disguised."

There were smothered exclamations of surprise and all cast curious glances at Benton.

"Boys, I will make a clean breast of it," said Benton. "I suspected Guilford all the time, and General Price suspected him, so I was sent to watch him. I told you I was after a traitor, but did not want to tell you it was my step-brother I suspected as I might be mistaken."

"But the warning, Bent," put in Dickey. "Surely the Unknown did not want you caught."

"Oh! Guilford did not want to see Bent hanged," put in Jerry dryly. "You see that would bring disgrace on the family."

“Disgrace will not stand in the way of his being hanged if Price gets hold of him. Curse him. He was always a sneaking whelp,” snarled Benton.

“What will you do, Bent?” asked one.

“Heed Guilford’s warning if he values his life,” replied Jerry. “If Bent stays here until morning Lawrence Middleton will inform on him sure.”

“How in the world did Middleton find out I am here?” asked Benton. “Even Mr. Craig do n’t know I ’m in the city. Is there a traitor among you boys?”

“Easy there, Bent,” replied Jerry. “The boys are all right. Guilford must have told him, and when he found out that Middleton would inform on you, he gave you this warning. It’s plain to be seen Guilford does not want you hanged, even if you would like to see him swing. But you are wasting precious time, Bent. Better get, and get at once.”

“It seems like running away,” replied Bent bitterly.

“It is not. You have found out what you came for,” said Jerry.

“Yes, you must go,” exclaimed the whole party in unison.

“I must see mother first,” was the answer.

“It’s dangerous. Better not,” replied Jerry.

“I will see mother before I go if hell stands in my way,” cried Benton vehemently.

"Boys, Benton is right," said Jerry quietly. "I would do the same. He shall go and I will go with him. I will see that he gets away all right. There is not an alley or dark street in St. Louis that I do not know. More than that I know the station of every picket post around the city. Many are the boys I have piloted out of the city to join Price's army. In two hours from the time we start I will guarantee to have Bent safe and sound out of this Yankee ridden city."

"Good for Jerry," was the cry.

"Well, boys, it 's good-bye then," exclaimed Bent. "Jerry, bring out that case of champagne I had you get. We will drink a toast to the confusion of the Yankee army before I go."

The eyes of the boys began to sparkle. It was the first time most of them knew that Bent had a case of champagne. The wine was brought and Benton raising his glass on high, cried: "Here is death to all Yankees and spies, particularly to Lawrence Middleton and Guilford Craig."

The toast was drunk with the greatest enthusiasm.

Then with the wish that he would see them all in Price's army before long, Benton took his departure in company with Jerry. It was now near midnight, and Jerry skilfully dodged two or three patrols, as he did not wish to be asked who they were, and why out so late at night.

As they approached the house of his step-father, Benton saw a light was still burning in his mother's room. As Guilford's room was in the rear of the house, Benton could not see whether there was a light in his room or not. The clock was just striking midnight when Benton rang the door bell. This he was obliged to do, as he had no night key, and the only way he could get in was to arouse the butler. That sable individual came to the door, grumbling and muttering. "Who 's dar?" he asked.

"I, Benton. Open the door quickly and on your life make no noise," whispered Benton.

"Good Land! Massa Benton heah," gasped the old servant, and with trembling hands he unlocked the door and Jerry and Benton stepped in.

The butler had lighted the hall lamp. "Put it out," ordered Benton in a low voice, "and look here, James, if you ever as much as breathe to a living soul, I have been here to-night, I will have you skinned. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Massa," replied James, trembling.

"Then stand here until I come back. Let no one else in on your life. Is your mistress up?"

"I reckon she is," replied the butler. "Po' Missy, something troubles her turrible. She sleeps little. She cries. She wrings her hands. Must be 'caus yo', Marse Bent, be in the war, and she afraid yo' git killed."

“Shut up, you black imp, and do as you are told,” growled Benton, as he led the way to the library.

“Stay here,” he said to Jerry, “until I have my interview with mother. I will make it as brief as possible.”

“See that you do,” said Jerry as he stumbled to a chair. “Time is precious.”

Benton went up to his mother’s room and tapped gently on the door.

“Who is there?” asked an excited voice.

“Benton, mother, I have come to say farewell.”

The door opened and the mother was enfolded in her son’s arms.

“Are you really going, Benton?” she whispered.

“Yes, mother, I have found out who the traitor is. But the Yankees have learned I am here, and I must get away.”

“Benton, Benton, go at once. Don’t stay a moment,” cried his mother. “Oh! what if you should be caught.”

“No danger, mother, I will be away safely before morning. This I must tell you. You have a viper in the house. Guilford Craig is the traitor.”

“Guilford — the — traitor.” The words came slowly from her lips. “Are you sure, Benton?”

“Perfectly sure. He will hang higher than Haman, if Price gets hold of him. I would hang him to-night if I could.”

“Oh, Benton, think of the disgrace. Think of his father. It would kill him.”

“Disgrace!” replied Benton with a sneer. “Can any disgrace be as black and damning as he has already brought on his father’s name? Spy and traitor that he is. Thank God! He is no kin of mine.” In his excitement Benton had raised his voice.

“Hush, I believe he is in,” said his mother. “He may hear you. He only came home yesterday.”

“Hear me? I wish he would,” stormed Benton. “I would like to tell him to his face what a black-hearted traitor he is.”

Then the wild desire seized Benton to see Guilford and taunt him with his treachery.

From what Dickey Holbrook had reported he knew that Guilford would never again knowingly place himself in the power of General Price. This would be his only chance of meeting him face to face. He would wither him with his curses. He looked upon Guilford as being sly, crafty, and treacherous, but not possessing real courage, and in his own mind he saw him cowering before him, a shivering wretch.

Forgetting that he might be imperilling his own life, he said, “Mother, I am going to see Guilford. I am going to wring from his own lips the confession that he is a traitor.”

"Do n't, do n't," cried his mother clinging to him. "He may kill you."

"Kill me! Bosh! I will make him cringe like a whipped puppy. I want to let him know that there are others as crafty as he is, and that he has been beaten at his own game. He thinks he has me fooled. I want to open his eyes. The Unknown, indeed!"

"I beg of you not to go, Benton," pleaded his mother weeping bitterly. "You have no time. You say you must be out of the city before morning. Oh, Benton, think of the danger of delay."

"It will not take long, mother. I must have the satisfaction of telling him what he is to his face. That he, not I, is the fool."

"Benton, he may kill you. Remember the time when as a child he sprang at you with a knife."

"I have something here," replied Benton tapping his hip pocket, "that will keep him quiet."

"Then I will go with you. I cannot have you see him alone. I know there is danger." She threw her arms around him and clung to him.

"Mother, you stay right here. Have no fear. There is no danger. Then think of me, a soldier, taking my mother along to protect me." Thus speaking Benton gently disengaged her arms from around him and went out. A moment she hesitated and then she softly followed him.

CHAPTER V

I AM THE TRAITOR

GUILFORD sat in his room quietly smoking. He had taken off his coat and put on a smoking jacket, but with his usual caution he had placed a revolver within the folds of the jacket. He now sat smoking and thinking. The day had been rather a strenuous one, but so far had gone as well as he could have hoped. Had he fooled Bent? He believed he had. But the great question was, Would Bent heed the warning? He hoped he would. As much as he hated him he did not want him to be hung as a spy.

“One thing is certain,” he muttered, “if Bent concludes to go he will come to see his mother before he does; and if he does, will he come to see me? I believe he will, if he has swallowed the bait of the Unknown. He will be filled with curiosity as to what I know, and, why, like himself I am in danger. He will also be hoping that I can clear up the mystery as to who the Unknown is.”

Thus Guilford sat musing, little thinking that if Benton did visit him it would be on an entirely dif-

ferent errand from what he supposed. He smiled as he heard Benton and Jerry enter the house. If he came at all he would soon be there.

After a time he heard footsteps, and then a sharp rap at his door. He opened it and Benton walked in, his face glowing with passion.

Guilford started back in well simulated surprise. "Great Heavens! you here, Bent! When and why did you come? It's dangerous."

"Yes, I am here," answered Bent in tones of mingled scorn and contempt. "And now what can you say for yourself, you black-hearted traitor?"

It at once dawned on Guilford that Benton might know more than he thought, but not a muscle of his face moved. He resumed his seat, took a whiff at his cigar, and then coolly replied: "That's a very brotherly greeting you have given me, Bent. Please take a seat and explain."

"Seat! I had rather take a seat from your master, the devil," sneered Benton. "Traitor that you are, if you had any shame, any regard for your father you would go and hang yourself."

"As to that," replied Guilford, "you and I both may swing if we are not careful. I have just received a warning from an Unknown —"

"Do n't keep that farce up. Fool, to think you have deceived anyone."

"Look here, Bent. You have called me some

hard names. You well know that anyone in the calling I am in, has to be traitor to one side or the other, so I have let your names pass. General Price knows and appreciates what I have done."

"He does, does he?" sneered Benton. "Then listen to this plain story. When General Price gave you orders to come here to spy on Lawrence Middleton, he doubted your loyalty. He sent me here to trap you, if you were guilty. Hardly were you out of sight before he commanded me to follow you and see whether you faithfully performed your duty or not."

"You are the liar now," said Guilford. "You are at your old tricks, Bent. General Price trusted me, but no sooner was I out of sight, than you poured your suspicions in his ear, and begged to be allowed to come and prove your suspicions true. Nothing would please you more than to see me hung. If I am what you charge, why don't I have you hung? A word and it would be done. I hate you as cordially as you hate me. Then why should I save you—you who came to spy on me. But go on, your story is getting interesting."

"It will prove more so," snarled Benton, showing his teeth like a dog. "I did come here to prove you a traitor, as I have suspected for some time. It was my duty. You have done the South harm enough. I knew you to be friendly with Lawrence

Middleton, and believed you to be the one who gave him our secrets. Generals Price and Frost could hardly believe you were such a dastard, yet as I have said, they were suspicious. Therefore I came to learn the truth."

"Noble youth," exclaimed Guilford ironically. "What have you learned?"

"You will know soon enough. For four days I have had Lawrence Middleton closely watched. Nothing occurred until you came, and then I was well repaid for my vigilance. Yesterday as you passed Middleton on the street you did not notice him, but slyly pressed a paper in his hand."

Guilford gave no sign of astonishment, but he was surprised Benton had been more crafty, and he had been more closely watched than he supposed. He now began to see that his idea of fooling Benton further was a vain one, but he said; "Another lie. Your spy saw me give Lawrence Middleton no paper."

"Middleton was seen to read a paper a moment after you passed, and then chew it up," exclaimed Benton triumphantly. "No doubt it was an engagement for a meeting from what afterwards transpired."

"So it was the carelessness of Lawrence that gave me away," thought Guilford. Then out loud. "Great evidence. Good." Guilford began to feel

a little more easy. Benton was simply jumping at conclusions.

“Yes, great evidence taken in connection with what has occurred to-night,” retorted Benton. “To-night Lawrence Middleton went to a dark place on Fourth Street and stayed there for some time as if expecting someone. But the person’s suspicions he was to meet, must have been aroused for as he passed Middleton he never halted, but said something in a low tone. From there Middleton went straight home, and the person went around another way and was let in by the rear gate to Middleton’s home.”

“I do n’t see what all that rigmarole has to do with me,” said Guilford dryly. “I am not Lawrence Middleton’s keeper.” But all the time he was wondering whether his disguise had been penetrated.

“You will see what it has to do with you, before I am through, arch traitor that you are,” retorted Benton. “This person remained in conference, supposedly with Lawrence Middleton, for nearly an hour. He was then let out the same way he came in. He was followed, and he was aware of it, for stepping into a dark alley he waited until Dickey Holbrook, who was tracking him came along, thrust a pistol into his face and scaring him to death made him tell all he knew.”

“Valiant Dickey,” laughed Guilford. “You

should employ braver spies. Did Dickey know who waylaid him?"

"No, the fellow styled himself the Unknown and sent word to me to be out of the city by morning, or I would be arrested as a spy."

"Must have been a friend of yours. If you know when you are well off, you will heed the advice. I received a warning from the same source and I am going to take it."

Benton was wild with rage. He fairly gnashed his teeth. "Liar! Dastard! Traitor!" he cried. "How much longer will you dissemble? Another one was trailing the Unknown, one not to be fooled, Jerry Alcorn. He tracked him straight to this house. He entered it with a key. No one has left the house since. Great God! Why do such vermin as you live? I ought to crush you as I would a reptile, even here in your father's house."

If Benton thought that Guilford would cringe when his duplicity was fully exposed, he was mistaken. Guilford now knew that there was no reason why he should continue his deception. He had been fairly trapped. While Benton had been speaking he had thrown aside his cigar. Now rising from his seat and looking Benton squarely in the eye he remarked sarcastically, "Let me congratulate you, my dear brother. You are more crafty than I supposed."

When he said this his right hand rested beneath

the folds of his smoking jacket. He took a step towards Benton, a look in his face that even as brave as Benton was, sent a shiver through him.

“You have had your say,” said Guilford in tones as cold as steel. “Now I will have mine. Give my respects to Jackson, Price, Frost and Company. Tell them you accomplished the purpose for which you were sent and claim your reward. The traitor has been found. It was I who gave away their most secret plottings to Lawrence Middleton, and he in turn to Lyon and Blair.”

For a moment Benton stood astounded by the bold avowal, then his face grew black with passion. “Viper, I have a mind to kill you where you stand,” he hissed.

“Don’t try it. You may fail,” replied Guilford, and as he said it the hand that was in his bosom twitched nervously. “Furthermore,” he continued, “tell that arch liar and plotter, General Frost, that when his orderly I had duplicate keys to his desk made and thus had access to his most secret correspondence.”

“Infamous! You black-hearted villain. You deserve a thousand deaths,” cried Benton.

“Tell them also,” continued Guilford without appearing to notice the interruption, “that I glory in what I did; that great as has been my deception, never can I equal them in deceit, treachery, and

falsehood. You despise me, do you? What do you think of yourself, plotting treason under the folds of the American flag and claiming its protection at Camp Jackson? I may be a traitor, but you and they are ten times the hypocrite and traitor that I am. There, do n't finger that revolver. It's death if you do."

From the blackness of his rage Benton's face grew pale. In Guilford's eyes he saw the same deadly glint that he saw when as a child he sought to plunge a knife in his bosom. There was death in the look, and he knew it, and his hand left the region of his hip pocket.

There was a rustle at the door. An exclamation of terror, but in their terrible earnestness neither Guilford nor Benton noticed it.

"Do you want to know why I, a child of the South, have done this?" continued Guilford, his voice falling lower and taking on a tone of sadness. "I will tell you. As a child I was timid, shrinking and sickly. I never knew a mother's love, but, oh, how my little heart yearned for love. My father, immersed in business, saw my bodily cares provided for, but there it ended. Still there was one who cared for me. My mammy. She took me to her bosom, nourished me, loved me, and I gave her all my love in return. Young as I was then I did not know the difference between a white and a black

skin, and I could not have loved my own mother more.

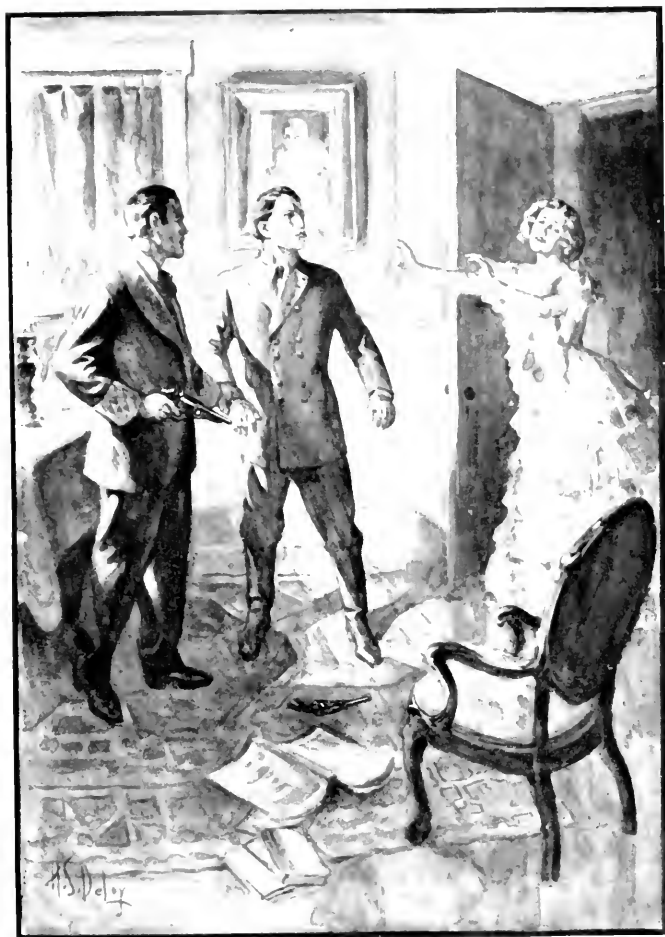
“Then I was told I was to have a new mother and your mother came and you with her. When she first came she caressed me, but I knew she did not love me. How I longed to be taken to her bosom, to be called her darling child, but she only had love for you.”

Again there was a rustle at the door, a sobbing moan of agony. It was not noticed and Guilford went on.

“I once more took refuge in the love of my mammy. You, Benton, older, stronger than I, lorded it over me as if I was a menial and you my master. You made my life a burden, and I grew to hate you. My mammy saw it all and she grew desperate. Then came that day, that terrible day that changed my whole life and made me what I am. Benton, if it had been your own mother being whipped you could not have suffered more than I did.”

Again that rustle, that moan and the trembling woman at the door pressed her hands to her heart in agony.

Guilford, his voice now vibrating with passion, continued. “I can still hear you clapping your hands in glee and crying, ‘Whip, harder! Whip harder!’ God! how I have hated you and slavery



The door burst open, and with a cry of "Spare, oh! spare my son!" Mrs. Craig fell senseless to the floor

ever since. Your mother with more than hellish cruelty made — ”

Guilford never finished the sentence. Benton, terrible in his rage, and forgetting everything cried, “No man can slander my mother and live,” and snatched at his revolver.

With a cat-like spring, Guilford with his left hand knocked the weapon aside and the shot went wild. Then with a strength he did not look to possess, he caught Benton by the wrist and twisted his arm. A look of pain came over Benton's face, and the revolver dropped from his nerveless hand. At the same time the muzzle of Guilford's pistol was pressed against his breast. In Guilford's face there was the pent up hate of years, and in a second more murder would have been committed, when there came a piercing shriek, the door burst open and with a cry of “Spare, oh! spare my son,” Mrs. Craig fell senseless to the floor.

A moment Guilford stood, then the expression of his face changed. Perhaps he thought of his own mother. He lowered his pistol. “Live,” he said, “but you have never been closer to death.”

Mrs. Craig's shriek of terror, and the report of the pistol had aroused the whole household. Terrified servants cowered in their rooms, and gave word to their fear in ear-piercing shrieks. Mr. Craig, aroused from a deep slumber, snatched an old

sabre and rushed as he supposed to the defence of his family.

Jerry Alcorn who, for the past half-hour had been pacing the library with nervous strides and cursing Benton for his prolonged stay, was on the point of going to Benton and telling him they must go, when the pistol shot and the shriek of Mrs. Craig startled him, and with quick bounds he went up the stairs.

Mr. Craig had preceded him. The old gentleman stood on the threshold, sabre in hand, and gazed at the scene before him in amazement. On the floor lay the senseless form of his wife. Benton with a face as pale as death was bending over her. Guilford with a revolver in hand stood motionless.

“My God! You here, Benton?” cried Mr. Craig. “Guilford! My wife! Great Heavens! Have you shot her, wretched boy?” With uplifted sabre he turned on Guilford with flaming eyes.

“She is not shot. She has simply fainted. Strike me down if you wish. I care not, but Benton has just tried to kill me.”

The old gentleman lowered his sabre, his whole form shaking like a leaf. He could hardly understand.

Jerry was the first one to take in the situation. “Benton, we are lost,” he cried. “The shot has aroused the patrol. Hark! they are thundering at

the door. Fool, that you are to throw away our lives that you might have revenge."

Guilford was once more his sane cool self. "Father," he exclaimed in quick sharp tones. "I tell you Mrs. Craig is not hurt. Bear her to her own room. She is sick, has been sick, has not been out of her room to-night. The excitement has thrown her into hysterics. Do you understand?"

Bewildered and as in a dream, Mr. Craig gathered up the senseless form of his wife, and bore her from the room. From below came the sound of splintered wood. The patrol was breaking in the door for the cries of the affrighted servants were still ringing through the house.

Guilford sprang to a window and threw it wide open. "Quick, Jerry, you and Benton, through there. It opens on the roof of the porch. Leave all to me. There have been burglars in the house."

Jerry and Benton understood. Without a word they dashed through the window and were gone.

Guilford noticing the revolver of Benton lying on the floor where it had fallen, picked it up and tossed it through the open window onto the roof of the porch, and then turned to face the patrol who with a sergeant at their head came rushing into the room.

"What is all this racket about?" demanded the sergeant furiously. "What's the matter?"

"The matter is easily explained," answered Guil-

ford coolly. "My mother is very sick and I had been sitting with her until a few moments ago when I returned to my room. As I opened my door I discovered that two burglars had climbed on the porch, opened a window and were just crawling into the room. I happened to have a pistol in my pocket and I took a shot at them. By the way they tumbled off the porch I reckon I missed. Of course the shot alarmed the whole house, and from the racket the servants are making, I judge they are somewhat frightened. At the sound of the shot father rushed in with the old sabre you see lying there, but he has gone back to mother, who is greatly excited over the occurrence. That is all, gentlemen."

The sergeant walked to the window and looked out. "Why, one of the scoundrels dropped his revolver on the roof of the porch," exclaimed the sergeant. "Do you think there is any chance of catching them?"

"Not in the least," replied Guilford. "They are well away by this time. Excuse me just a moment, gentlemen, I want to see how mother is."

Guilford went to Mrs. Craig's room, spoke a few words to his father and coming back said, "Gentlemen, I must ask you to be as quiet as possible. The excitement has thrown mother into hysteria, and father, greatly alarmed, has sent for two physicians."

"Beg your pardon," replied the sergeant. "We

will withdraw quietly. Sorry we broke in the door, but no one came to open it."

"No apology is necessary, Sergeant. You only did your duty. I suppose the butler was under the bed shaking with fear. Let me thank you for your promptness in coming as you supposed to a scene of crime. Here is something to treat your men." Guilford handed him a five-dollar bill.

The sergeant was profuse in his thanks and withdrew his men quietly.

Guilford drew a long breath of relief as they departed. "Now to quiet the servants," he said, "and then—" He had to decide what the "then" would be.

CHAPTER VI

A STRICKEN FATHER

IT was sometime before Guilford could allay the fears of the servants, and convince them that no one had been killed. Burglars had broken into the house, he told them, but he had shot at them and frightened them away.

None of the servants, except James, the butler, knew that Benton had been at home. Under threats of the most horrible punishment Guilford swore him to everlasting secrecy. "It is as much as our lives are worth if it is known he was here. The Yankees would hang us both," said Guilford.

"I nevah tell, Massa Guilford," replied the trembling butler.

It is well to say here that Mr. Craig had sent his two daughters away to a school which he thought would be far away from the excitement of war.

Soon the household was restored to its wonted quiet, with the exception of Mrs. Craig. She was in a violent hysteria. Two physicians were doing everything they could to quiet her. It was no time to make explanations, and Guilford told his father he

would explain everything in the morning. He then repaired to his room and sat down to think.

"I am glad I did n't kill Benton," he said softly to himself. "He loves his mother."

Then he looked at a portrait of his own mother which hung on the wall. The mother he had never known. He had spent hours looking at it, when a child, and wondering why God took her, and he never tired of hearing Susan tell what a sweet lady she was.

Now as he gazed on the portrait, a look of the deepest sadness came over his face. "If she had only lived," he sighed, "it might have been different."

Suddenly he started up in amazement, and stared at the portrait with startled eyes, and a tremor shook his body from head to foot.

The ball from Benton's revolver which he had struck aside had pierced the portrait where, if she had been in its place, her heart would have been.

"Great Heavens!" he gasped and sank down faint and weak. At that moment, he felt as if Benton had really killed his mother, and a fierce desire for vengeance filled his heart. At length he arose, tottered to a seat by the table, and, burying his face in his hands, sat silent for a long time.

When he lifted his face it looked worn and haggard, more like the face of an old man than a boy.

"It is the only thing I can do," he said wearily.

“I cannot meet father. I cannot say to him all I wish to say. I cannot bear his scorn and contempt. It's the only way. To him as well as to the world, Guilford Craig must be dead — dead.”

He hastily arose, and gathering together writing material, he sat down to the table and rapidly commenced writing. At length he finished and without looking at what he had written, folded the sheets, placed them in an envelope directed to his father, and left the letter on the table.

Next he placed a few of his belongings in a valise and then stood a moment looking around the room, at length fixing his gaze on his mother's portrait. The rent made by the ball seemed frightfully large, but the eyes smiled down upon him. A moment he looked and then he turned, and just as the gray dawn was beginning to show in the east, he left the house — he believed, forever.

Mr. Craig never forgot that night. He could only surmise what had taken place. He knew that Guilford and Benton must have had a fierce quarrel. One that nearly resulted in murder. Yet Guilford had aided Benton in escaping. He could not understand it. Why was Benton at home? Why had his presence been kept concealed from him? He thought Benton was with Price. But he must wait until morning, then Guilford had promised to make all things plain to him. His place was now by the

side of his wife, and as he listened to her incoherent talk his heart was filled with fear, and a vague terror took possession of him. His wife must have known Benton was at home, for was she not in the room with Guilford and Benton when the quarrel took place. Then at times she would sob, "Benton, why did you come? They will hang you." Then she would shriek, "Guilford, don't shoot. Spare my son."

But what puzzled Mr. Craig most was when she would sob with broken moans, "Guilford, forgive me. I did not mean to be selfish and cruel, but Benton is my son, my own son."

Once she started up wild eyed and shaking in fear. "There is Susan," she cried, "take her away. See how she looks at me."

Mr. Craig was like a great many other men of affairs. His business engrossed all of his attention. When his wife died and his infant son was committed to the care of his mammy, he knew the child would have the best of attention. What money could buy was freely given, but a father's love was withheld. Not that Mr. Craig did not care for or love his son, for he did, but he had no time for caresses. As a child Guilford had no more thought of carrying his small griefs to his father, than he would to a stranger. It was in the bosom of his mammy that he found love and sympathy.

At last Mr. Craig noticed that his son was lavishing too much love on his mammy — that in his heart there was no caste, that he did not realize the difference between a white and a black skin, between the bound and the free. It was time Guilford had a real mother, and so he had married.

But the woman he chose for a wife was both fashionable and selfish. Then she had a son of her own in whom all the love she had to give was wrapped up, so she had no motherly affection to give the child of her husband. Glad not to be troubled with him, she still left him in the care of his mammy. Guilford made no advances towards his new mother and she encouraged none. But the two boys did not agree. Then came the sad ending and the sale of Susan.

Guilford cherished his hate in secret and grew to young manhood as we have seen, sly, crafty, moody and in a measure a monomaniac on the subject of slavery. He would have made a fit companion for John Brown.

Mr. Craig was a violent partisan of the South. He believed in the divine ordination of slavery. He rejoiced when secession came. That the South could be conquered was to him an impossibility. He aided Frost all he could in the attempt to capture the arsenal. When Benton entered the militia Mr. Craig purchased for him the finest horse and equip-

ment that could be had. He opposed Guilford's joining on account of his youth, but at length consented, and it was at his request that Frost had made Guilford his orderly. Thus unknowingly he had contributed to the success of the Federal cause.

The capture of Camp Jackson he considered one of the greatest outrages ever committed on a free people, and Lyon became to him the personification of everything evil. Guilford acting as a spy for General Price, he greatly disapproved, and begged him to give it up every time he returned home. "If you must fight," he would say, "do so like a gentleman."

But Guilford would declare he was doing the Southern cause more good than a hundred soldiers, and was willing to take the risk.

It was near morning before Mrs. Craig became quiet, and at last sank into a peaceful sleep. The physicians now assured Mr. Craig that all danger was past, that all she would need was rest and quiet. But nothing should be said or done to excite her.

Weary with his vigil, and with his heart torn with conflicting emotions, Mr. Craig obeyed the call for the morning meal. He did not feel like eating but he would see Guilford. He must know the meaning of what had taken place. Guilford not being down, Mr. Craig managed to drink a small cup of coffee, and

eat a few mouthfuls. He then sat waiting, but no Guilford appeared.

“James,” he said to the butler, “go to Guilford’s room and see if he is awake. Tell him to come down as soon as possible.”

The butler obeyed but in a moment came back with the startling intelligence that Guilford was not in his room, that the bed had not been slept in, and that the room was in disorder.

With a muffled groan Mr. Craig sprang to his feet, and hurried to the room. It was as the butler had said, but the letter on the table caught his attention. Snatching it up he tore it open with trembling hands. He had read but a few lines when an awful expression came over his face. If the paper had been his own death warrant the effect could not have been greater. He gasped for breath and reeled like a drunken man. He glanced at it again to be certain he was not mistaken, then with a bitter curse he threw it down and stamped on it in fury.

“May the curse of God rest upon him,” he cried. “The devil in hell rend him. A traitor, a black damnable traitor.”

For half an hour he raved like a mad man then after his fury had somewhat spent itself, his thoughts took a new turn.

“The boy must be insane. He has imagined all this. It cannot be. It must not be true. I cannot

believe it. The whole letter will show him to be insane. He was always a queer boy."

Thus saying he picked up the letter and this is what he read:

DEAR FATHER:—

I thought to see you this morning and tell you all, but I find I cannot do it. I cannot face you and tell you I am a traitor to all you hold dear, that I have been playing a double part. Instead of being for the South, for the past months I have been acting as a spy for Blair and Lyon, and it was greatly through the information that I furnished that the arsenal was saved to the Union.

I know that you will despise me, hate me. That you will curse the day you had a son born, and never want to look upon my face again. I do not blame you, but in extenuation of what I have done, hear what I have to say.

Here followed a long recital of what the reader already knows. In fact Guilford laid bare his whole life. How he had pined for love and received none except from his mammy. He told of the brutality of Benton, and how Susan had been scourged and sold, because she sought to protect him.

The letter then continued:—

From that time I have hated slavery with a deadly hatred. This war has given me the opportunity I have long wished for — to deal slavery a deadly blow. Contrary to what you believe, the war instead of perpetuating slavery will be its death. The South in her blindness has dug the grave of her beloved institution.

In no other way could I have aided the cause of the Union than in doing what I have done. As to the deceit and treachery I have practised, it is no greater than that practised by one of the most honored men in the State. What did your friend Frost do, in order that he might capture the arsenal? You were privy to his acts and endorsed them. Then why am I worse than you or he? I have no apology to make. I am proud of what I have done.

But I know that you will curse me. That to every Southern sympathizer in St. Louis I will be a Benedict Arnold, hated and loathed. All those I have associated with will spurn me as a viper. I will be a social leper. Therefore forget you ever had a son. Erase all your remembrance of me. Make Bent your heir. That is what he long has wished. He came here on purpose to prove me a traitor and have me hanged as a spy. He tried to shoot me. I do n't blame him. It was the kindest act he ever tried to do me. I have often thought of taking my own life. Now, that the war is on, for the first time I want to live. There is plenty of excitement, and I want to live to see slavery dead.

From this day I am dead to you. If I fall in the great struggle now going on, you will never know it, for my name will be changed.

Forgive me for the pain I may cause you. In many ways you have been a kind father. Now, farewell forever. Remember that Guilford Craig is no longer of this world. He is dead.

After reading the letter Mr. Craig sat for a long time as one stupefied. He then leaned his face on his hands, and the hot tears trickled through his fin-

gers. At last he picked up the letter and read it through again, this time very carefully.

"I was right," he murmured. "The poor boy is insane. Has not been right for years. I now see it. Great God! Why could I not see it before. And I, his father, am to blame. Poor child, only his mammy to love, and she scourged and sold for trying to protect him. Guilford, Guilford, my son, my boy, forgive me. I will protect you. I will tell the world you did not know what you did. Come back, Guilford. Come home."

Thus the poor father rambled on. Then he read the letter again. It did not read as if written by one insane. He began to see how impossible it would be for him to convince his friends that his son was not in his right mind.

"If he had only taken a manly course," he groaned. "Hard as it would have been I could have borne it. Many of the noblest sons of the South cling to the Union. If he had only done as Lawrence Middleton has. There is no dishonor in his course. But this deceit, this treachery. Oh! God! My son! My son!" He bowed his head on his hands and wept.

At length he grew calmer. "Yes, Guilford," he moaned, "you are right. Better be dead. Dead and forgotten, lest your treachery come up against you. I have no son. Oh! God! He is dead —

dead." He staggered from the room, looking ten years older.

He gave orders that everything belonging to Guilford was to be destroyed — that his name was never to be mentioned. When the servants came to the portrait of Guilford's mother they marvelled at the bullet hole through it and discussed whether they should show it to their master or not. But one gray-haired servant who had nursed Guilford's mother in her girlhood took it and carefully put it away. "De honey child may want it sum time," she whispered. "De po' boy. De po' boy."

Mrs. Craig's recovery was slow. All that she was told was that Benton was safe, he had escaped. But when she grew stronger and learned it was through Guilford that he escaped and was saved from an ignominious death, conscience stung her as it had never stung her before.

There was a sensation throughout St. Louis when the treachery of Guilford became known, for Jerry Alcorn and others told, and to every one who loved the South and its cause his name became execrated, even as the one who betrayed his Saviour.

Even the heart of his father grew hard, and though he claimed that he believed that his son was not in his right mind, he publicly acknowledged that he had disowned him, that he never wished to hear his name mentioned, that the only son he had was Benton Shelley.

CHAPTER VII

THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY

WHEN Benton Shelley and Jerry Alcorn escaped from the room of Guilford Craig they dropped lightly from the roof of the porch to the ground, unhurt. The yard in which the house was situated was a large one and full of shrubbery.

“This way,” whispered Jerry leading the way to a tree near the rear fence. To climb the tree, crawl out on one of the branches and drop on the other side of the fence was but the work of a moment, then through the alley to another street.

“Take it easy now,” said Jerry. “Do n’t hurry. Do nothing to attract attention, but keep your eye peeled for patrol guards. We must avoid them.”

Through unfrequented streets and dark alleys Jerry led the way, now and then crouching in the shadow of buildings to let the patrol guards pass.

“How are we to pass the pickets which surround the city?” asked Benton.

“Easy enough,” answered Jerry. “Wait and see.”

Soon they came to the outskirts of the city. A large mansion, standing back from the street, and surrounded by extensive grounds loomed darkly before them. A high stone wall, surmounted by iron pickets, guarded entrance to the grounds. The gateway was rounded in, so that the gate was completely in the shadows.

Jerry carefully observed the ground before they crossed the street. There was no one to be seen.

"Bend low," he whispered, "follow me, and walk carefully."

Soon they stood in the shadow of the gateway. Jerry gave two raps on the gate, waited a moment, then gave three more.

"Who is there?" came in a low voice from the other side of the gate.

"Friends of the rising Confederacy," whispered Jerry.

"Friend, give the pass word."

"The two Bears."

"Right." There was a sound of sliding bolts, the gate was thrown open, and they passed in.

"Hello, Jerry, is this you?" said the keeper of the gate. "What news? Who is with you?"

"Allow me to introduce Lieutenant Benton Shelley of Price's army," said Jerry, "who is fleeing from the wrath to come. Lieutenant, Mr. Montague, keeper of our underground railroad."

Mr. Montague shook hands with Benton. "Getting warm for you in the city, was it?" he asked.

"Rather," answered Benton with a shrug. "I could fairly see the rope dangling before my eyes."

"Saved his neck from being stretched by a scratch," said Jerry with a laugh. "Never had a closer shave myself. Tell you all about it as soon as the Lieutenant gets away. His horse is back some miles, at Logan's, I believe."

"That is bad," said Montague. "Logan is not on the line, but I will try to arrange it. It will be almost impossible though to get him there by daylight. Why not let the Lieutenant rest here during the day and then he will have the whole night before him?"

Benton shook his head. "It is best I go on."

"I reckon the Lieutenant is right," said Jerry. "Do n't know what may happen to-day. The whole city may be searched. The lieutenant has been here after big fish, and he has located one of the biggest traitors in the State. Is Murdock here?"

"Yes. I will see him. Be ready to move on in fifteen minutes, Lieutenant. Before you go you had better have something to eat. You look weary and worn."

"Good enough. Feel like eating myself," exclaimed Jerry.

They were taken into the basement of the house where no light could be seen from the outside. To

Benton's surprise he found a sumptuous repast already prepared.

"We are always ready to feed the hungry," remarked Mr. Montague smiling. "You will find the coffee splendid, Uncle Sam's best. You would be surprised if I should tell you all who have sat at this table. Murdock will be ready by the time you are through eating. Enjoy yourselves, gentlemen."

When left alone Jerry explained that the house was really the chief station on what might be called an underground railroad, and was the main artery of connection between the Southern element in the city and their friends in the country and the army.

"The house," said Jerry, "is owned by one of the richest men in the city, who is known as a Union man. All men connected with the line are known as Union men. Many noted Confederate officers have passed into and out of the city, and the Yankees none the wiser. Don't offer to pay any of your guides. All of them are getting good salaries."

Benton laughed heartily. "Jerry, you ought to be in the army at the head of our scouts. I will speak to General Price about it, and I do n't believe there will be the least trouble in getting you a commission. Think of it, Jerry."

"I am doing a good work here," replied Jerry. "Still there is precious little honor in it. I sometimes long for the army. Yes, I will think of what

you say. I may be obliged to leave the city now that Middleton and Guilford know that I have been mixed up in your affair. But, Bent, what happened between you and Guilford? I suppose your temper got the best of you. I was afraid all the time you would make a fool of yourself. But that was a neat turn Guilford gave us. I suppose we ought to thank him for it. It saved your neck."

Benton's brow darkened. "Jerry," he exclaimed passionately, "I would leave St. Louis happy if I could leave Guilford Craig and Lawrence Middleton dead. Guilford not only boasted of his treachery, but insulted my mother. I lost my head and tried to shoot him. He was too quick for me. I saw murder in his eye and thought I had but a second to live, but mother burst into the room and that stopped him."

"Yet a minute afterwards he showed us a way to escape," said Jerry. "He cannot be wholly bad."

Benton gave utterance to a fierce oath. "Jerry, I will never rest until I have his perjured life. He hates me. Even as a child he tried to kill me. Why he let me go, I do not know. It makes no difference. He is a traitor of the darkest dye, and the law of the world has ever been that death should be the doom of all traitors. What difference does it make whether a court martial, or a single individual executes that law?"

Benton stopped a moment, then looking earnestly into the face of his companion slowly said, "Jerry, more than one soldier and Dutchman have been found dead in the streets and alleys of St. Louis, and no one knows how they came by their death. More than one man has disappeared, never to be heard of more. He who would rid the earth of Guilford Craig and Lawrence Middleton would but execute the judgment of an outraged South, and he would be hailed a hero."

Jerry turned pale and his hands trembled, but before he could answer Mr. Montague came in. "All ready, Lieutenant, when you are," he said. "I trust you have been refreshed."

"Yes, thanks to you," answered Benton. "I do not know how I can ever repay you for your kindness."

"You have already repaid me a thousand times by fighting for the South," answered Mr. Montague heartily.

"Jerry tells me you are all stanch Union men," said Benton.

"Certainly, to deceive the Yankees is a part of our bible, and accounted an act of righteousness."

"Good gospel," laughed Benton.

Benton was now ready to go, and taking Alcorn's hand, said, "Jerry, I do not know how I can thank you enough for what you have done. I trust it will

not be long before I shall see you with us in Price's army. I know a grand career will open up to you there. And" — here he looked at Alcorn earnestly — "if any accident happens to certain individuals, greater honor will await you."

Thus sowing the seeds of assassination in the mind of Jerry Alcorn, Benton Shelley went his way. Did his conscience trouble him? No, his heart was too full of hatred.

Benton's guide, a man named Murdock, proved to be silent, taciturn. He was heavy set and of rather evil countenance. "Follow me and keep quiet," were his only words.

The way led through the lawn, then up a narrow lane with fields on each side. The lane ended at a wood, through which wound a path. Soon they came to a road. Keeping in the shadow of the wood, Murdock halted and gave the low call of a night bird. The call was immediately repeated on the other side of the road.

"Come on, it's all right," said the guide crossing the road to a thick hedge, the only way through being guarded by a heavy gate. By this gate stood a man.

"How is it, Daniels?" asked Murdock.

"Quiet as a church," was the answer. "Who do you pass through to-night?"

"Lieutenant Shelley of Price's army. Mr. Mon-

tagne tells me that he is the bearer of an important message. That he must get to Logan's by morning."

"Logan? Why, he is not on the line," exclaimed the man called Daniels in surprise.

"I know, but Shelley is recently from Price and knew nothing about the line, but he knew Logan, so he left his horse at his house."

"Well, it's a little risky, but I will do the best I can. Must be eight miles there."

"Can't help it. Get him there," growled Murdock, and with a blunt good-bye he was gone.

The man Daniels proved more social, and much more of a talker than Murdock.

"Tired?" he asked.

"Tired? I can hardly walk. This beats campaigning all to pieces," answered Benton. "The fact is, my friend, I am about used up. They found me out in the city and I had to run to save my neck."

"Spy, eh? Do n't suppose you care about being captured then?"

"Not alive, but you do n't think there is any danger of that, do you?" asked Benton nervously.

"No, not if I could keep you in the line, but to get to Logan's we will have to take the road a good part of the way, and that may be dangerous. Better not say anything to Logan about the line."

"Why, do you doubt Logan's loyalty to the South?" asked Benton surprised.

"No, the trouble is, he is too blame loyal and spits it out. Can't keep his tongue in place. Now everyone of us connected with the line are true and loyal citizens of the United States, dote on old Abe, and worship the star spangled banner. We each and everyone of us have papers to that effect. See?"

"I see," replied Benton.

"To get to Logan's by sun up you will have to have a horse. Dare not take two, but I am good on a trot."

Benton was more than glad to hear he was to have a horse. Now that the excitement of the last five hours was over, he felt completely exhausted, and knew that it was utterly impossible for him to walk the seven or eight miles, they said it was to Logan's, without a rest.

In due time the horse was brought and they started. Daniels proved he was no boaster as far as his pedestrian qualities were concerned. He took a dog-trot and kept it up.

After going about a mile they came to another road where again the night call was given and repeated before they ventured to cross. Daniels held a short conversation with the man on guard, and Benton heard him say, "Blamed if I'd do it, Daniels. It's too dangerous."

"Got to," replied Daniels. "Them's the orders."

Daniels then explained to Benton that they had

gone on the line as far as they could. They would now have to take the main road. "Ruggles, here, thinks its dangerous, but I do n't look for much trouble, if we are careful. Only this, and mind what I tell you, if we hear any Yankee soldiers coming, you slide off and hide. Leave the rest to me. If we meet any soldiers it will be cavalry and we can hear them."

They now took the main road and made good progress. Only once did they meet anyone. They had gone about three miles, when the tramp of horses and jingling of sabres told that a troop of cavalry was coming.

"Slide, and slide quick," said Daniels.

Benton dismounted, and running quickly to a clump of bushes near the road secreted himself. Daniels mounted the horse and slowly jogged forward.

"Halt," exclaimed the commander of the troop as Daniels met them. "Where to, my friend, this time of night?"

"Most mornin'," drawled Daniels. "Bought a cow yesterday of old man Sutton who lives up the road 'bout five miles. Started early to get her, so as to get back to shuck corn. I'm a good Union man. Have papers to show it," and he began to feel in his pockets.

"No time to look now. Go and get your cow, but

too many of you fellows are good Union men by day and guerillas by night. Forward boys!" The troop rode on.

"Are they all put off as easy as that?" asked Benton as he came up and remounted the horse.

"Do n't have much trouble. It pays to be a good Union man. I sell a heap of stuff to the Yankees, big money."

They now made rapid progress and just as it began to be light Daniels stopped and pointing to a house about half a mile away on a cross road said, "That is Logan's. You will have no trouble to make it. I must be going back."

"How about that cow if you should happen to meet that same troop of cavalry?" asked Benton.

"Oh! Old Sutton jumped the contract. Would n't let me have her, without I would pay five dollars more. Would n't humor him. Well, good-bye, Lieutenant. Luck to you." And he was off.

"A genius that," said Benton as he looked after him. "What a spy he would make." Then a scowl came over his face for he thought of Guilford.

Benton found the family at Logan's just sitting down to breakfast and was given a warm welcome.

"I have been greatly worried over you," said Mr. Logan. "Were you successful in what you wished to find out?"

"Yes, but I had a narrow escape from arrest,"

answered Benton. " Still, the information I received well repaid me for the danger encountered."

" Have any trouble in getting away? " asked his host.

Benton remembered what Daniels had said about not telling Logan about the line, so he remarked lightly, " Not a great deal. Some friends helped me slip through the pickets."

" Some of my neighbors," said Logan, " have taken the oath of allegiance and pretend to be good Union men, when I know they are as big Rebels as I am. Blamed if I will do it. Lose everything I have first."

" Good for you, Mr. Logan," said Benton. " Yet the neighbors of whom you speak may in a secret way do much for the Confederacy "

" Maybe," replied Mr. Logan doubtfully.

Benton needed both sleep and rest and he concluded to wait over until evening before he started. Mr. Logan told him this was a wise thing to do as scouting parties from St. Louis were numerous.

Early in the evening, refreshed by a good sleep, Benton started on his long journey. He was now clad in the uniform of a Confederate officer and he knew that everyone he met who sympathized with the South would be his friend. He had carefully mapped out his route and made good progress. He met with no adventure of moment until in Webster

county he heard the faint sound of firearms in front, and in a few moments a number of rough-looking men dressed in homespun came galloping down the road. They were armed with slot guns and squirrel rifles, and Benton knew at a glance they were guerillas. He halted the foremost and asked the trouble.

"Yanks," was the answer.

"How many?"

"Do n't know. A right smart number." They started to ride on when Benton in a tone of authority cried, "Halt!"

"I am ashamed of you men for running before you know whether you have any cause to run or not," he said.

In the meantime the guerillas had kept coming until there were fifty or sixty of them in the road.

"Let every fourth man lead the horses over the brow of the hill there. The rest of you take position along the side of the road in the wood and when the Yankees come give them a warm reception."

Just then the leader of the band who with three or four more who had lingered to hold back the enemy, came up.

"What's up?" he thundered. "Why do n't yo'uns git along?"

Just then he spied Benton. "I halted your men, Captain. I am not accustomed to see Confederates

run. In Price's army we let the other fellows do the running."

"Who are yo'un?" asked the leader with an oath.

"I will tell you when we whip these Yankees," replied Benton.

A squad of Federals had appeared up the road. When they saw the enemy had halted, they stopped, held a consultation and then turned around and disappeared.

"They are afraid," cried Benton. "Order your men to mount and run after them."

The leader shook his head. "Not we'uns, Cap. Them fellers shoot. An' thar is too many of them. We'uns never fight, without we'uns got the under hold."

Benton was disgusted, but he saw it would not do to anger the rough men around him, so he said to the leader, "I believe your men could whip the whelps, for you have a fine looking set of fellows."

Here those who heard began to grin, but Benton went on. "You asked who I am. I am a Confederate officer on the staff of General Price. The general is badly in need of soldiers just such as you men would make. Why not come with me and join Price? May I make your men a little speech?"

"If yo'un want to," was the gruff answer.

Benton then gave the men a little talk telling them what honor would await them if they would join

Price, and how they would hurl the Yankee vandals from the sacred soil of their beloved State.

The speech met with a cool reception, and of the whole gang but two men signified their willingness to go.

The leader, whose name was Odell, said with a grin, "No use, Cap, the men are like me. They do n't hanker after life in a reg'lar camp. The brush for we'uns. Honest farmers when we'uns want to be, and sogers when we'uns like. For sport we hang a Union man when we'uns catch him. No, Cap, we'uns thank yo'un for your kind invitation but the free and easy life for us. Is n't that so, boys?"

"You bet," they shouted. "No army for us."

Benton looked his disgust, but said nothing. While he despised the wretches with all his heart, he knew it was such bands as this one, that kept a small army of Federals busy, and in this way they were helping the Confederate cause.

Accompanied by the two men who had volunteered to go with him, Benton went on his way, taking a road to the left to avoid the Federals, which he was aware was only a scouting party.

His two recruits told him they had come with him because they were sick and disgusted with the cruelty and barbarity they were not only forced to see but to take part in. They told tales of outrage and murder that made Benton shudder.

“ Yet,” said one of the men, “ we had to join the band or be victims of their outrages ourselves.”

In due time Benton reached his destination. He found Price slowly falling back, his army growing weaker each day by desertions. It was evident many of his men, like Odell's gang, had no relish to become regular soldiers. They had rather take to the brush and become guerillas.

“ Back, so soon,” cried General Price when he saw Benton. “ I am so glad you are back safely. But what news? What news? ”

“ General,” replied Benton, “ my suspicions were correct. You have been betrayed by as foul a traitor as ever lived.”

The general turned pale. “ And I trusted him so, because he was a Craig,” he gasped.

Recovering his composure he said, “ Lieutenant, you look weary and must be so. Rest, and this evening make a full report.”

That evening Benton found gathered at headquarters not only all the members of General Price's staff, but the principal generals of the army. They listened to Benton's story with the closest attention, and it must be said he told it well. One thing he did not tell and that was that he was indebted to Guilford for his life.

The feelings of Generals Price and Frost can be imagined as they listened to how they had been

duped by a mere boy. As for General Frost, he was white with rage.

"Do you mean to tell me that that traitor had duplicate keys to my desk while he was acting as my orderly?" he roared.

"That is what he said," answered Benton. "Moreover he told me to tell you that he gloried in his treachery, and whatever you might think of it, he could never equal the deceit and hypocrisy you practised in trying to deceive Lyon."

A faint smile was seen to play around the lips of some of the officers present, as Benton said this, for many believed that Frost should have let Basil Duke and Colton Green have their way, and struck boldly, and not have tried a game of trickery. If Duke and Green had been permitted to carry out their programme of March 4 they believed the arsenal could have been taken.

As for Frost he was wild when he heard what Guilford had said. "I will never rest," he shouted, "until I see that traitor hung — hung higher than Haman."

While General Price deeply felt the deception which had been practised on him, he did not let his face betray his feelings.

"Gentlemen, what is past cannot be helped," he said calmly. "Now that Guilford Craig has been unmasked, he can do us no more harm. But we

have a duty to perform, that of rewarding the brave and gallant officer who freely exposed his life that the traitor might be discovered. Lieutenant Shelley, stand up."

Benton arose, his face glowing with pride.

"Gentlemen," resumed the general, "allow me to introduce to you, not Lieutenant Shelley but Captain Shelley; and never was a promotion more richly deserved."

The room rang with the loud huzzahs of the officers, and they crowded around Benton to shake hands. It was one of the proudest moments that Benton had ever known.

General Price, now aware that the despatches which he had intrusted to Guilford were in the hands of the Federals, and that the weakness of his army was known, made preparations to fall back. He did so deliberately, having little fear that Fremont would strike, as Lyon would have done, swiftly and surely.

About a week after Benton had returned he was amazed to see riding into camp Jerry Alcorn and with him six others.

Benton's heart gave a quick throb when he saw them. Had Jerry acted on his suggestion and Guilford and Lawrence been assassinated? He was in a quiver of excitement and rushing up to Jerry grasped him by the hand.

"What is it, Jerry?" he asked. "What news?"

"Come to get that commission you spoke about," replied Jerry grinning.

"But — but — has anything happened?"

"Lots, or we would n't be here. The traitors still live, thanks to Dickey Holbrook, who tried to be the whole thing, curse him! But Dickey did the brave thing at last, and warned us; though I sometimes think he gave us away first. He or someone of the boys did, for the Federals got on to the whole plot, where we had our rendezvous and everything. But no more now. I have warned all the boys to keep their mouths shut. We have come to join Price; not a word why we had to leave."

A crowd had begun to gather, and Benton saw that it was wise not to say more. That evening Jerry told him the whole story, and how he had failed to murder Guilford Craig.

CHAPTER VIII

LAWRENCE IS PROMOTED

WHEN Guilford Craig left his father's house, he went to an obscure hotel where he engaged a room. He felt that he had burned every bridge behind him, that he was as a stranger in a strange land.

His first thought was to flee the city without letting even Lawrence know, and under another name and in other fields seek new adventures. He had been paid liberally both by General Lyon and General Price, and this added to what he had been saving for years from the allowance given him by his father gave him several thousand dollars, so there was no danger of immediate want.

One thing he was fully determined to carry out to the very letter — that was, to be dead to all who knew him. To do this neither friend nor foe must know what name he assumed or where he went. I will go East, he thought. It will be around Washington that the great battles of the war will be fought. In the vast army gathering there I will indeed be as one dead.

Then as if some good angel had whispered to him he said, "I cannot go without first seeing Lawrence. I promised to see him this morning, both him and Blair. I would be false to them if I went away without telling them what has happened."

While thinking, he mechanically put his hand in his pocket, and felt a package of letters, letters he had brought from officers in Price's army to be delivered to friends in St. Louis. In the stress of events he had not yet examined them. Among them was one written by General Price to a leading secessionist of the city. Now that he was discovered there was no occasion for the letters ever to be delivered, but Lawrence and Blair must see them, especially the one from General Price. It might be very important, for the general had cautioned Guilford to deliver it only into the hands of the one to whom it was addressed. Finding the letters only confirmed Guilford in the thought that he must see Lawrence, before he took his plunge into the unknown.

He had little heart for breakfast, but he managed to drink a cup of coffee and eat a few mouthfuls before he started for the home of Alfred Middleton to meet Lawrence. It was yet early, and but few were stirring, for which he was glad. He did meet one he knew. One, who had a son in Price's army, and he could hardly get away from him, so eager was he

for Guilford to tell him the news. Guilford told him what he wished to know, and as the gentleman left he wrung Guilford's hand with tears in his eyes saying, "God bless you, Guilford Craig, for what you are doing for the South."

As Guilford looked after him an expression of pain came over his face, and he murmured, "He don't know now, but he will in a few hours, and then Guilford Craig will be a devil."

A moment later he came face to face with Jerry Alcorn. Jerry gave a startled look and darted up an alley.

"Fool to run," said Guilford. "He might know if I wanted to have him arrested all I would have to do, is to call a patrol. He must have got Bent safely away. I am glad of it."

If Guilford had known what was in the thoughts of Jerry at that moment he would have regretted that he let him escape.

It was hardly eight o'clock when he knocked at the door of Alfred Middleton's residence, and asked if Lieutenant Middleton was in.

"Be yo' Massa Craig?" asked the butler.

"Yes."

"Den, sah, de Lootenant is in. Jest had breakfast. Told me to tak yo' right up to his room."

Lawrence met Guilford with outstretched hand.

"I'm so glad to see you," he cried. "I hardly slept a wink last night thinking of you, and that you might be in danger."

Lawrence stopped suddenly and gazed into the face of his friend. "Guilford, what is the matter? What has happened? You look as if you had just arisen from a bed of sickness," he exclaimed with much feeling.

Guilford's haggard face told that he had been suffering. He smiled wanly and said, "Not sick, Lawrence, but I have suffered since last I saw you. In fact, I have been through, as it were, the fires of purgatory."

Lawrence took his hand; it was hot and feverish; and leading him to a seat said gently, "Now tell me all about it. It will do you good."

"In the first place," said Guilford, "I must tell you that my days as a spy for General Price are over. Bent has discovered everything, and is now on his way back to Price."

Guilford then gave a full detail of all that had happened since he parted with Lawrence the night before. Lawrence listened with breathless attention, now and then asking a question.

When Guilford told of his encounter with Benton and how near he had come to killing him, Lawrence cried, "I'm glad you did n't do it, Guilford. I'm

glad you did n't do it. It would have been dreadful. In your father's house too."

"He can thank his mother for his life," said Guilford.

Then he told of his letter to his father and what he had written; and Lawrence cried, "You are not going to do that, Guilford."

"I am going to do just that," answered Guilford sullenly, "and do you know, I came near not coming to see you at all."

"Guilford, what would I, what would Blair have thought?" asked Lawrence.

"That is the only thing that made me come," exclaimed Guilford. "I could not bear that you and Blair should think me false. Then I have some letters that Blair should see."

When Guilford was through, Lawrence sat in deep thought for a moment, and then said, "Guilford, are you fully determined to do what you wrote your father?"

"Yes, nothing can change me. From this time Guilford Craig is dead."

"I am going to give you a little solid advice, Guilford. But first let me tell you a little of my own history. You know nothing of my early life. Few do in St. Louis."

Lawrence then told him what had happened to his father and himself in Missouri and Kansas.

“ So you see,” continued Lawrence, “ slavery took from me a dear father. Like you I hate slavery, but not the people who own slaves. Think of what Judge Lindsley did for me; think of how Uncle Alfred took me in and cared for me. Can I hate those who have befriended me? No, never.

“ This war is not waged against a people nor against slavery, but for the preservation of the grandest nation on earth. If it is necessary for its preservation that slavery must go, it will go in due time, and I am beginning to think it must go. If it does, you and I will rejoice.

“ Guilford, you have had a loveless childhood and you have become morbid on the subject of your real and fancied wrongs. It is wrong for you to feel as you do towards your father; yes, even towards your step-mother and Benton. Think of the grief you are causing your father. To do as you say you will do, would be worse for him than to see you dead.”

“ You do n't understand,” exclaimed Guilford, a gleam of anger in his eyes. “ If all you have to say is to lecture me, I might as well go. As for my father I have already caused him all the pain I can. He would rejoice if I had died before I became a traitor to all he holds dear. You well know that I will be loathed, execrated by all my people, and all who ever knew me. No, it is for my father's sake I have determined to become as one dead.”

“ Guilford, forgive me,” said Lawrence, and tears came into his eyes as he said it. “ I now see that for the present, as far as your father is concerned, you are right. In the future it may be different. But, Guilford, do n't go away, do n't bury yourself in the Eastern army. You may be needed here.”

“ I can see no way of doing more here,” said Guilford. “ You have been ordered to your regiment by Fremont. You are no longer a staff officer of General Lyon. As for me, now that I am known for what I am, I see nothing more I can do here. Lawrence, I would like to stay with you, to work with you, if things were as they were with Lyon. But now I have no heart to work. Fremont is a failure, a dead failure. He is losing all that Lyon gained.”

“ Give Fremont a little time,” said Lawrence. “ I hear he is about to make a forward movement.”

“ Too late to catch Price now,” answered Guilford. “ Lawrence, I must bid you good-bye, you will never see Guilford Craig again.”

“ Guilford, if you must go, do n't go yet,” cried Lawrence. “ Remember you promised to see Blair this morning. That is, I promised to bring you with me to see him.”

“ Blair! Blair! That makes me think I have some letters yet which I brought from the Confederate camp, which I have not yet looked over. Now they can be examined and thrown away. One of

them is from General Price himself to Judge Pentworth. That may be valuable."

Thus saying, Guilford reached into his pocket and drew forth several letters. They lost no time in looking them over. The letter to the Judge, while cautious, was a piteous plea to him to use all his influence to urge the people to come to his support. "The great majority of those who come to me," Price wrote, "refuse to go out of the State. They will not enlist as soldiers in the service of the Confederacy. If I fall back — and fall back I must if Fremont makes an advance — they will desert by hundreds."

"Fremont must see this letter," said Lawrence.

"Not until Blair sees it," said Guilford. "I have no dealings with Fremont."

"Then let us go to Blair at once," exclaimed Lawrence.

"Not I," said Guilford. "You can take it. Tell Blair good-bye for me."

Lawrence put his hand on Guilford's shoulder, and looking in his face said, "Guilford, you and I have worked together for a long time. Now I want you to make me one promise, that you will not go until after I see Blair and after I see you once more. Promise me this," and Lawrence's voice trembled as he said it.

Guilford hesitated and then replied, "For the love

of you, Lawrence, I will grant your request. Come this evening to where I am staying." He gave him the street and number.

The two boys shook hands and parted. Guilford to return to his obscure hotel and remain secluded, and Lawrence to see Blair, who was about to start for Washington.

To Blair Lawrence told Guilford's story, only keeping back the fact that Guilford had aided Benton to escape, thinking that Blair would not like it. He was glad, for when Blair heard that Benton had escaped he exclaimed vehemently, "Why didn't Craig shoot the villain in spite of his mother? So it is all up with young Craig as to his playing the Confederate spy any longer."

"Yes, but here are some letters he brought from the Confederate camp," said Lawrence. "One is from General Price to Judge Pentworth."

Blair took the letters and hastily glanced them over. "If Guilford Craig never did anything before," exclaimed Blair, "the delivery of these letters entitles him to the gratitude of every Union man. Fremont must see them at once. I understand he goes to Jefferson City to-morrow. If he does not act on them and strike Price quick and hard, I would not give much for his generalship.

"Come, Lieutenant, I want you to go with me."

"What!" asked Lawrence in surprise. "After

what occurred yesterday? You know he ordered me to report to my regiment."

"Which order I asked him to hold in abeyance," replied Blair.

When Blair and Lawrence arrived at headquarters they found everything in confusion, for Fremont was about to go to Jefferson City to assume personal command of the army.

"Tell the General I wish to see him on very important business and in private," said Blair to a staff officer.

In a few minutes the officer returned saying Fremont would receive him.

As they entered the august presence of Fremont, the General stared at Lawrence and then said curtly, "Mr. Blair, I thought you wished to see me in private."

"So I do," replied Blair, "but as Lieutenant Middleton is so intimately connected with what I want to say I brought him along. But, General, first read this letter." He handed Fremont the letter of General Price to Judge Pentworth.

Fremont read the letter through and looked up in astonishment. "Who gave you this letter?" he asked abruptly.

"Lieutenant Middleton," replied Blair.

"And how did you come by it?" asked the general turning to Lawrence.

"It was given to me by one of my scouts," quietly answered Lawrence.

"Your scouts? Your scouts? How came you to have scouts?" asked Fremont, his tone showing both surprise and anger.

"The General forgets that I was the chief of the Secret Service of General Lyon," answered Lawrence, "and that I employed scouts and spies who reported to me only."

"You, you the head of General Lyon's secret service? Why you are nothing but a boy," replied Fremont with a look of incredulity.

Before Lawrence could reply, Blair said, "General Fremont, Lieutenant Middleton speaks the truth. Young as he is it was through him and the spy through whose hands this letter came, that we were able to thwart the machinations of the enemy."

"But how did the spy get hold of this letter?" asked Fremont.

"I suppose Price gave it to him," answered Blair with a smile. "To be brief, General, this spy of Lieutenant Middleton's is supposed to be a good Confederate, a trusted spy of General Price's."

"Where is he? Can I get him?" asked Fremont greatly interested.

"He has been discovered, I regret to say," replied Blair. "Bringing these letters is his last trip. But, General, the letter of Price's is important."

"It is," answered Fremont. "It bears out what my own scouts have reported. I shall move on Price the earliest moment I can concentrate my forces."

"Be careful he does not slip through your fingers, General," said Blair. "But to come to the point on which I came to see you. You know how important it is that you should receive as correct news as possible as to the movements of the enemy. There is no one in the army who can furnish you the news as correctly as Lieutenant Middleton here. Yesterday you ordered him to his regiment. Pardon me, but I think you made a mistake. You should keep Lieutenant Middleton in your service; if not on your staff, at the head of an independent company of scouts. You will find that he will be of inestimable value to you."

Fremont sat for a time, as if in deep thought. He was well aware that so far his administration of affairs in Missouri had been a failure. He had come in conflict with President Lincoln and been forced to withdraw his famous proclamation that the slaves of all secessionists in the State should be free, thus anticipating Lincoln's proclamation by over a year. The fall of Lexington added to his unpopularity, and there went up from all over the country a demand for his removal. No one knew better than Fremont that his keeping the command of the Department of Missouri hung by a slender thread

which might be snapped at any time. The fall of Lexington must be avenged, or his fate was sealed. To do what Blair asked would do no harm, it might do good. So he said, "Blair, from what you have told me Lieutenant Middleton may, as commander of an independent company of scouts, render important service. I have no place for him on my staff, but I will give him full authority to raise such a company as he wishes. Let him call at four o'clock this afternoon. All the necessary papers for this independent command will be ready. I am now very busy or I would have further talk with the Lieutenant, as I have been much interested in what I have heard. Good day."

Lawrence had listened to this conversation between Fremont and Blair with the greatest surprise. He had not the least inkling as to what Blair was to ask, but when alone he grasped the hand of his friend and said, "You must have read my thoughts, for you asked for what I most desired. I hope I can now keep Guilford Craig."

"Ah, my boy, I know you," answered Blair laughing. "I only wish I could be here to help you organize your company. But I have no fears. Get that company together, for I may need you after a time. In all probability I shall resign my seat in Congress and accept a command in the army."

Thus saying, he shook Lawrence warmly by the hand and went his way.

Lawrence was highly elated. He could hardly wait until four o'clock, when he was to receive the necessary authority to raise his company.

At the appointed time he returned to headquarters, and the adjutant general placed the coveted papers in his hand. They were full and complete. They gave him full authority to raise a company of not more than fifty men, and he was to act independently, but should report as often as necessary to the general in command, nearest the point where he was acting.

But the best of all, with the order was a commission as captain. This almost took Lawrence's breath away. It was more than he had ever dared to hope.

"Now to Guilford," he exclaimed, "with the good news. I do hope I can get that foolish notion of his of going away, out of his head."

CHAPTER IX

A MURDEROUS PLOT FOILED

THE clock was striking seven as Lawrence entered the little hotel where Guilford was staying. He asked for John Jackson, for Guilford had told him he registered under that name.

The hotel keeper looked at Lawrence suspiciously, for a Federal officer was not often a visitor, and when one came, it generally meant trouble.

The hotel keeper wrinkled his brow. "John Jackson. John Jackson," he said in a tone of deep thought. "I believe there was a feller of that name who stopped here, but he is gone."

"I know better," exclaimed Lawrence. "Show me to his room immediately, or it will be the worse for you."

"He said he was going to-day, anyway," sputtered the hotel keeper. "His room is Number 11. I will go and see if he is in."

"No, thank you. I will go myself," said Lawrence.

The hotel keeper muttered something under his

breath, and then said, "Very well, up stairs to the right."

Lawrence tapped at the door of 11 and it was opened by Guilford himself, but disguised as Charles Morris.

"Glad to see you, Lawrence. I am all ready to move. I take the eleven o'clock train for the East."

"Oh, Guilford, I have great news to tell you," exclaimed Lawrence. "You are not going East. You are going to stay with me. Listen."

Lawrence then told him of his independent command and of his being commissioned as captain. "Just think what it means, Guilford. I want you to be one of my lieutenants."

Guilford shook his head. "I am glad for your sake," he answered. "But how can I stay? Have I not told you Guilford Craig is dead?"

"Guilford, you must stay," cried Lawrence. "I will have no heart to raise my company if you do not. Think how we have worked together for the past months. Guilford Craig may be dead, but Charles Morris is not."

This was a happy thought. "Morris was my mother's maiden name. I have a right to it," said Guilford, "but even in my disguise I have been seen."

"Only at night," replied Lawrence. "Then only by two or three and you were only identified as Guil-

ford Craig by Jerry Alcorn trailing you home. Why not come in my company as Charles Morris?"

"Let me think," said Guilford wavering. "I had so fully made up my mind to go away that I cannot imagine it otherwise. Do n't speak to me, Lawrence, just let me think."

Guilford sat down, leaned his head on his hands and remained for some time in a deep study. At last he raised his head and said slowly, "I will remain with you, Lawrence, if we can agree on certain conditions, not otherwise."

"Name your conditions," replied Lawrence eagerly.

"First: You must not enlist in your company a single man who already knows me. All must be strangers.

"Second: You must never reveal my identity, even if I should fall. Charles Morris I must be in death, as well as in life."

"Must I never tell your father if — if you should be killed, which I hope will never be?" asked Lawrence.

"Above everyone, not him. To him I am now dead. Let it be so. Promise me faithfully, or I start East to-night."

"I promise," said Lawrence, "but I see I must now enlist my company out of St. Louis, lest by chance I get some one who may know you."

“Then it is settled,” said Guilford. “Lawrence, your hand.”

Lawrence gave him his hand and Guilford looked into his face long and earnestly. At last he spoke. “I can trust you, Lawrence. Look for the last time into the face of Guilford Craig. Never call me by that name again. Guilford Craig is now dead, but Charles Morris lives.”

When afterwards Lawrence knew how the name of Guilford Craig was execrated by all who knew him; how Mr. Craig would not allow his name to be spoken, and proclaimed to the world that he had no son, he felt that Guilford was not far wrong.

The next two days were busy ones to Lawrence for he was making preparations to leave for the northern part of the State, where he expected to raise his company. During this time, Charles Morris, for by this name Guilford must now be called, remained quietly at his hotel. But death was not only on his track, but on the track of Lawrence as well, though they knew it not.

The words of Benton Shelley had sunk deep into the heart of Jerry Alcorn. Jerry, by birth poor and belonging to a stratum of society which was looked down upon by the slave-holding portion of the city as no better than “niggers,” had keenly felt his position, for he had ambitions, and also some ability.

By the time he was twenty he had gathered quite

a political following, and was able to get enough influence to be appointed a policeman. This position he lost by refusing to obey commands in the troublesome days before the war came. He was an ardent Rebel, for he believed that the black Republicans with Abe Lincoln at their head were trying to make the nigger just as good as a white man, and this Jerry resisted with all his soul.

It seems to be a part of human nature for one stratum of society to look down upon and despise the strata supposed to be beneath it. As the slave-holding population of the South despised "the poor white trash," "the poor white trash" despised the negro. The belief that the war was waged to make the negro their equal, made them as ardent secessionists as their slave-holding brothers.

It was this belief that drove thousands upon thousands of the poor whites into the Confederate army, and made them the best soldiers in the world. Accustomed to look up to and honor the slave-holder as a superior being, they obeyed orders without a murmur, and fought with desperation.

Thousands upon thousands of the poor whites of the South fell upon the battlefield that slavery might live, and yet slavery was as great a curse to them as it was to the negro.

Jerry Alcorn was no stranger to violence. During the rioting in St. Louis he had assisted in beating to

death two or three of the hated "Dutch." Naturally brutal by nature, he had little moral scruple in acting on the suggestion of Benton Shelley. The hint that the assassination of such a traitor as Guilford Craig might not only win him honor, but might lead to a commission, took possession of him.

Jerry was vain and fond of display. He remembered how grand the officers of Frost's militia looked as they rode forth to Camp Jackson; how fair ladies threw flowers in their pathway and cheered them. He fancied himself on a prancing horse, a clanking sword by his side and waving plume in his hat. Should he do the deed and claim the reward?

First, Jerry lost no time in spreading the news of Guilford's treachery. The Southern element were dumbfounded. Maledictions deep and fearful were heaped upon Guilford's head, and it was plain to be seen that anyone putting him out of the way would have the sympathy of the entire party. This decided Jerry. He believed he would have little trouble in escaping after committing the deed.

He lost no time in calling together some half-dozen of his confederates. Of those who had helped Benton spy on Lawrence, he dare approach but two, Dickey Holbrook and Allen Duncan. His other four were professional toughs, ready for any desperate deed. As we have seen, Dickey Holbrook was not renowned for his courage, but he was sly and crafty.

No one could trail a victim better than he, and no one could put up a better story if caught.

To the six Jerry unfolded his plot, telling them that honor awaited them if they could accomplish the death of that arch traitor, Guilford Craig.

"It's a duty we owe the South, to put him out of the way," said Jerry. "We can do it and no one be the wiser."

"That's so," spoke up one of the gang called Billy the Kid. "I have helped put three Dutchmen out of the way and no trouble."

"If we are suspected, there is Price's army," said Jerry. "A grand welcome would await us there." Then he added with a wink, "I am thinking there would be some who would give big money to see Guilford Craig put under ground."

"But how are we to find him?" asked Allen Duncan. "The rabbit must first be caught, and Craig has not been seen for the past two days."

"If he is still in the city," replied Jerry, "all we have to do is to watch Lawrence Middleton, and you may be sure we will find him. And, by the way, if we get the chance, it would be a mighty good thing to give Middleton the same dose that we do Guilford. He is as deep in this traitor business as young Craig."

The matter was fully discussed and ended by the seven binding themselves together by the most horri-

ble oaths to kill both Lawrence and Guilford. But how?

"Let's find them first, and then decide," said Jerry. "Let our headquarters be here and let the first one who finds out anything report."

"Let me have the first trick on spying," spoke up Dickey Holbrook. "I owe Guilford a turn for the way he fooled me."

"All right, Dickey. Go ahead," replied Jerry. "But be sure and don't let him scare you to death again."

Dickey turned red. "I reckon you would be scared if you found a revolver thrust in your face," snapped he. "Just give me a chance and I will show you fellows what I can do."

"Well, you are good at trailing anyway," said Jerry, "and Middleton do n't know you. He is onto me, and if he should see me sneaking around he would become suspicious."

This all happened two days after Guilford had consented to go with Lawrence, and during this time he had remained quietly in his hotel.

Lawrence had made all preparations to leave the city for Rolla, thinking that the best place to recruit his company, as that place was filled with Union refugees, the whole of southwest Missouri being now in the hands of the Confederates, and the county over-run by murderous bands of guerillas.

Unconscious of impending danger, Lawrence in the evening went to see Guilford to tell him that everything was ready and that they would start for Rolla in the morning.

Fremont was already in Jefferson City making preparation for his forward movement, and Lawrence wished to lose no time.

That afternoon the sharp eyes of Dickey Holbrook watched every movement Lawrence made, and when he started to see Guilford, Dickey trailed along behind and had no trouble in following him to the little hotel.

Lawrence went in and Dickey stood in the shadow of the building waiting and thinking what he had best do. It was now dark and he had no fear of being discovered. He was about to go and tell the boys that he was sure he had discovered Guilford's hiding place when the door opened and Lawrence and Guilford came out, and walked slowly down the street.

Dickey followed softly, but they did not go far before they turned and Dickey had just time to dodge into a dark alley. As if tempting fate Lawrence and Guilford stopped right in front of the alley. Dickey trembling with excitement could have reached out his hand and touched them.

"Then you believe your life is not safe in the city," Lawrence was saying.



There was a flash, a stunning report, and Lawrence felt a burning sensation along his forehead

“Not for a minute as long as Jerry Alcorn is here, but that will make little difference as we go in the morning.”

So Lawrence and Guilford were going to leave the city in the morning and Jerry's plotting would come to naught. Then a mighty thought thrilled Dickey. They were side by side; one shot would suffice for both. He could n't miss them, they were so near. He could shoot and dash up the alley. Such a deed would make him the leader of the gang. He would show Jerry Alcorn he was not the coward he supposed him.

With shaking hands Dickey Holbrook reached for a heavy revolver that he carried concealed in his bosom.

There was a flash, a stunning report, and Lawrence felt a burning sensation along his forehead, and at the same time a piece of the rim of Guilford's hat went flying away.

Without waiting to see the effect of his shot, Dickey threw the revolver away and darted up the alley; but fate was against him, the alley was a blind one and brought up against a stone wall. In the darkness Dickey did not see the wall, and ran against it with such force as to be flung back and thrown violently to the ground.

For a moment the flash blinded both Lawrence and Guilford, then they heard the thud of Dickey's

revolver as it struck the ground, and his rapidly retreating footsteps.

Without hesitation Lawrence dashed up the alley, drawing his revolver as he went.

“Look out,” called Guilford, “there is a brick wall ahead.”

This made Lawrence halt but he heard a groan in front and advancing cautiously soon came on Dickey, who was still unable to rise.

By this time Guilford had come up and Dickey was dragged to his feet badly shaken.

The shot had been heard and a patrol guard, under the command of a sergeant came running. “What is up? Who fired the shot?” he asked breathlessly.

“This fellow tried to murder us,” said Lawrence. “Let’s get to the light and see who he is.”

“Why, it’s Dickey Holbrook,” exclaimed Guilford, the moment he saw the culprit. “Dickey, I am surprised. If it had been Jerry Alcorn I would not have thought it strange; but you, Dickey!”

Dickey did not answer. He had hardly recovered from the shock of his fall.

The sergeant now noticed Lawrence’s uniform and saluting said, “Lieutenant, will you go with us or wait until morning to make your charge against the prisoner?”

“First let me speak to him in private,” said Law-

rence, and taking Dickey aside he said, "Dickey, do you know that you will swing about to-morrow for this?"

Dickey turned as white as a sheet, "Oh, my God! Do n't hang me," he gasped.

"I do not know that I can save you, but I will see what I can do if you will tell me the exact truth. Who put you up to this? and why?"

Dickey with his teeth chattering, gasped, "Won't — won't you hang me if I tell?"

"I have not the power to hang, or not to hang you," answered Lawrence. "But this I know: it will be better for you to confess all. As I told you, I will do all for you I can if you do this."

Shivering with fear, Dickey told all he knew. Lawrence heard with darkened brow.

"So that scoundrel, Benton Shelley, would hire an assassin to murder his step-brother after that step-brother saved his miserable neck from the gallows," exclaimed Lawrence, his heart filled with anger.

"And you too, he would have you killed, too," whined Dickey.

"And Jerry Alcorn was the one to carry out Shelley's murderous plans?" asked Lawrence.

"Yes, Jerry was the one who got us into it," eagerly replied Dickey. "He is the one to blame. If any one is to hang, he should be the one."

“ You say you have a place of rendezvous? ” asked Lawrence.

“ Yes, no doubt Jerry and the boys are there now. I will lead you to the place if you will let me go. ”

“ I cannot let you go, but where is the place? Telling will count much in your favor. It may save you. ”

Dickey told, not only this, but of a secret exit at the back which he offered to show them.

“ Sergeant, ” said Lawrence, “ this fellow has confessed to a most damnable plot, and tells me where the rest of the conspirators are congregated. Hurry and get help, and we may be able to capture the whole gang. ”

The sergeant spoke to one of his men, and he rushed away to bring reinforcements.

“ The reserve station is not far, ” said the sergeant. “ We will have reinforcements within five minutes. ”

Lawrence now looked for Guilford, but he was nowhere to be seen. He had slipped away.

“ He does not want to be mixed up in this affair, ” thought Lawrence. “ He ’s right. It will be sufficient for me to make complaint. ”

In the meantime Dickey Holbrook was thinking hard. He was no fool. He had attempted the life of a Federal officer, and he knew that no one could save him. His only chance was to escape.

He now began to complain, said that his running against the wall had nearly killed him, that he could scarcely stand and would be unable to go with them to show them the place of hiding.

"I think this will put just a little strength into you," said the sergeant, pricking him with his bayonet.

Dickey howled and protested he was telling the truth.

A lieutenant with twelve men now came hurrying up, brought by the soldier who had been sent for reinforcements.

He was a pompous fellow and asked in a fierce tone, "What 's the trouble here?"

"Allow me to explain," said Lawrence stepping forward, and in a few words he told what had occurred.

"You think we can bag the whole lot?" asked the lieutenant eagerly.

"Yes, if we hurry," answered Lawrence.

"Forward men! Double quick! Be sure the prisoner don't escape," shouted the lieutenant who thought he saw a captain's commission in the future, if the raid was successful.

Poor Dickey was hurried along, apparently so weak he might drop at any moment. But like a rat in a trap he was looking for a chance to escape. He felt he had forfeited his life either way, for if

by chance the Federals let him go, his companions would seek revenge for his treachery at the first opportunity. Oh! if he could only escape and warn them. They passed a place where an excavation was being made for a new building. The soldiers who had hold of Dickey were almost dragging him along, so weak did he pretend to be. As they passed the excavation Dickey gave a sudden jerk and dived head foremost into the hole.

All was excitement, a dozen rifles blazed, and a number of soldiers leaped into the pit after the fugitive. Dickey was fleet of foot and he seemed to be unharmed, for the soldiers heard him scramble out of the other end of the excavation, and then he was lost in the darkness.

Some moments were spent in a fruitless search. The lieutenant in command was furious, cursing the soldier who had let Dickey escape and placing him under arrest.

"Lieutenant," said Lawrence, "let us waste no more time, lest the escaped prisoner get to the rendezvous before we do and the whole gang get away."

"That is so," answered the officer, and calling back his men from the pursuit, they hurried to the place where Dickey said the gang met. To break down the door and get into the room was the work

of but a moment, but Dickey had been ahead of them. The room was empty.

Hatless and breathless and with a face as pale as death Dickey had rushed into the room, where he found the whole gang present.

"Run! Run for your lives," shouted Dickey. "Everything has been discovered. The place will be surrounded by soldiers in a few moments. Run, I tell you."

A dark suspicion crossed the mind of Jerry Alcorn. With an oath he drew his revolver. "Have they scared everything out of you again?" he thundered. "Speak, before I blow out your cowardly brains."

"No, no," cried Dickey in terror. "Did n't you hear the firing? They were shooting at me — me who was risking my life to warn you."

"My!" suddenly exclaimed one of the men. "Look at Dickey's hand." The blood was running down it and off his fingers.

"I — I did n't know I was hurt," gasped Dickey.

Jerry caught the arm and gave a quick look. "Only a flesh wound," he said. "But such as it is it has saved your life. What has happened?"

"No time to tell now," cried Dickey. "Only they captured me as I was trailing Guilford Craig. I heard him tell the officer in charge that he knew

all about our plot, and where we met, and that if he hurried he might catch the whole gang of us. Then I broke and ran to give you warning. There! Hear that."

The sound of running feet was heard approaching.

"Out the back way," shouted Jerry. "Follow me. It's to Price's army now. The jig is up with us in St. Louis."

But as he went he muttered, "If Dickey tells the truth Guilford Craig must be in partnership with the powers of darkness."

CHAPTER X

A CHANGE OF BASE

OWING to the incidents related in the preceding chapter, Lawrence was delayed for a day in getting away, for he had to report to the provost marshal the affairs of the night before.

“I will have that whole gang by night if they are still in the city,” said the marshal. “I am afraid they may have fled, for I am confident there is constant communication between the city and the county.”

“There is not the least doubt of that,” answered Lawrence. “This Jerry Alcorn of whom I spoke is a dangerous man and I hope you can catch him, but I am of the opinion he and his gang are well out of the city by this time. The failure of the plot to assassinate me will alarm them.”

“It was a close call you had,” observed the marshal.

A red streak across Lawrence’s forehead showed how close the call had been.

“I am not anxious for anything closer,” replied Lawrence. “I must now bid you good day, as I

have given you all the information I can. I am off to-morrow."

"To join Fremont? Well I hope Price will get what he deserves. Things have been going wrong since Lyon was killed. The capture of Lexington gave us a terrible black eye."

"It was a disgrace which should be wiped out," replied Lawrence. "I am going to help do it."

"Good!" and the marshal shook Lawrence warmly by the hand as they parted.

During the day Lawrence fell in with an officer he knew well and who had been with him at Wilson Creek. To him Lawrence showed his commission and confided his plans.

"I congratulate you," said his friend. "But if I were you I would raise that company right here in St. Louis. The best young men of the city would jump at the chance to go in such a company as that."

"I would like to," answered Lawrence, "but certain conditions which I am not at liberty to state preclude my enlisting a single man in St. Louis."

The officer looked surprised. "I cannot imagine what conditions would forbid your enlisting men here," he exclaimed, "but such being the case I would advise you to go to St. Joseph, instead of Rolla."

"Why St. Joe?" inquired Lawrence.

“ Because St. Joe is on the border. There you will meet rough dare-devils, those who have fought both Indians and border ruffians. You could raise a superb body of men, fighters, every one.”

“ I will think of it,” said Lawrence, as he bade the officer good-bye.

The more Lawrence thought of it, the better he liked the idea, so when he met Guilford he told him they would go to St. Joseph instead of to Rolla.

“ It may be all right,” said Guilford, “ but I do n't like the border fellows. Many of them are as bad as guerillas to steal and plunder.”

“ Well, we may stop off before we get to St. Joe. I am convinced I can raise a company in Northern Missouri quicker than in any other part of the State, so there we will go if you are willing.”

“ Oh, I am willing to go anywhere so we get out of St. Louis,” answered Guilford.

That evening Lawrence went to bid his uncle and aunt good-bye. The parting was painful, for he well knew they despised the uniform he wore, and that it was only their love for him that kept them from driving him from their door.

The next morning Lawrence and Charles Morris (no longer Guilford Craig) started north. The journey was not without its dangers, for the whole northern part of the State swarmed with irregular bodies of Confederates, mostly guerillas. Every

train had to be closely guarded, and railroads were being continually torn up. The progress of the train was slow and Lawrence found that all the troops that could be spared were moving south to join Fremont in his forward movement to crush Price.

It was sometime the next day before the train reached Cameron, some forty miles east of St. Joe. Here there was a delay, and Lawrence found an Iowa regiment ready to march south to Lexington as Price had abandoned that place. Lawrence happened to state to the colonel his purpose.

The colonel slapped his thigh. "Captain, I believe I have it," he exclaimed. "A company all ready raised for you. Last night a company of fifty State troops reported. They are under the command of a Captain Mark Marvin, a young man who knows nothing of military training, but looks as if he had good stuff in him. He reported here to me, for he did not know where he really belonged, or to whom he should report. He told me if he could find a good man who understood military tactics, he would willingly yield command, and take second place. I will send for him."

"First, let me look over the company," replied Lawrence.

The colonel laughed. "I see you are cautious," he said.

“I want a good company,” answered Lawrence.

Lawrence sauntered over to where the company was encamped. He saw they nearly all had good horses. This pleased him. The men as a whole were stalwart bronzed fellows, most of them from farms or the plains. Some there were with rough, hardened faces, which bore traces of crime and dissipation. All of them were young and full of life and energy. As a whole they impressed him as being all right. He could weed out the poor and vicious ones.

He went back and reported to the colonel that he found the company all right and Captain Mark Marvin was sent for.

When he came Lawrence saw a sturdy built man of about twenty-five years of age. His black hair was long and heavy on his shoulders; his eyes, dark and piercing, were shaded with heavy black eyebrows, and his square heavy set jaw denoted both courage and determination. His dress and looks bespoke the plains, but his countenance was open and honest, and Lawrence liked him.

The proposition was presented to him without unnecessary words. He examined Lawrence's commission and orders under which he was to act, asked a number of questions and then said, “I rather like this. It makes a fellow independent of every dude who wears a shoulder strap, a little

higher up in rank than yours is. And, Captain," looking Lawrence straight in the face, "I rather like you. You are young, very young, but you must have done something or Fremont would never have given you such a commission."

"Done something? I should say he had," spoke up the colonel. "Do n't you know he was on General Lyon's staff, was at the head of his secret service? It was he who caught Lyon when he fell at Wilson Creek."

"Jerusalem!" exclaimed Marvin. "On General Lyon's staff and with him at Wilson Creek. Here's my hand, Captain," and Lawrence received a grip of the hand which made him wince.

"Thank you," said Lawrence. "I can sincerely return the compliment and say that I like you, but what will your men say about the change of commanders?"

"I reckon the boys will be all right," answered Marvin. "Some of them may kick a little, as they hate discipline. Come on and I will put the thing up to them."

The company was duly ordered to fall in, and when in line and at attention Marvin made them a little speech in which he brought the blushes to Lawrence's cheeks, as he told what a brave officer he was and what an honor it would be to be commanded by him. Marvin concluded his speech by

saying, "But the best thing of all and what influenced me in doing as I have, is the kind of service which we will be called on to do under Captain Middleton. Of this the Captain can tell you better than I. Boys, Captain Middleton."

There was a look of surprise on the faces of the men as their captain commenced his speech. As he proceeded many glances were cast at Lawrence and several spoke up and said, "We don't want any other Captain than you."

One burly fellow with a sinister countenance, sneeringly remarked in a stage whisper, "What, that young popinjay be our captain! Not much! The first thing he would do would be to order us to black our boots and wear white collars."

"Silence in the ranks," thundered Captain Marvin, and then turning to a corporal, he snapped, "Corporal Sanders, arrest Kelley. I will attend to his case after I am through."

"Marvin is just the man I thought he was," thought Lawrence, "he will do to tie to," but he interfered by saying, "Captain, please let Kelley remain. I want a free expression from the men and wish no one to be punished for that expression."

"Very well," replied Marvin. "Kelley, you may remain, but be careful you do not interrupt again."

There were no more interruptions. The little

episode had made friends for Lawrence, who now addressed the company.

He read them his commission and explained what he expected them to do. "The work," he said, "will be arduous and dangerous, but less irksome and far more independent than life in the regular army. But do not think," he continued, "that because it is an independent company you will not be under discipline. I shall expect every man to do his duty, strictly obey orders, and be a model soldier in every respect. Now it is for you to decide. Captain Marvin, I will leave you to talk matters over with the men of the company and give me their answer."

For a time there was a babel of voices, and arguments pro and con, but the idea of an independent company appealed to them, and by a unanimous vote the company accepted Lawrence as their captain.

The next two days were busy ones for Lawrence. The company was regularly organized with Lawrence as captain, Mark Marvin as first lieutenant and a young man named James Bates as second lieutenant. Charles Morris was introduced to the company by Lawrence. "Morris is not a regularly enlisted soldier," he said, "but is enrolled as a scout and spy. In this capacity he has performed much valuable service. I consider it fortunate he has

consented to serve under me. Consider him as one of our number."

"If Captain Middleton thinks himself fortunate that I serve under him," said Morris. "I consider myself doubly fortunate in having that privilege. I came with him because I know him, and when you come to know him as well as I do, you will be glad you are in his command." With these words Morris turned and walked away.

"What a glum looking chap," said Marvin. "Has he lost all his friends?"

"He is singular," answered Lawrence, "but you will find him as true as steel. You must remember he works most of the time with a halter dangling before him. Time and time again he has entered the camp of the enemy and there is a price on his head."

Lawrence stopped. He was telling too much, so he changed the subject.

While the company was not as well armed as Lawrence would have liked, each had a carbine and a navy revolver.

On the morning of the third day after Lawrence had arrived at Cameron, the Iowa regiment spoken of started for the front to join Fremont, and Lawrence concluded to accompany it, much to the joy of the colonel, who had taken a great fancy to him.

"I will need you," the colonel said. "The coun-

try through which we will pass is infested with bushwhackers, and infantry is of little use against them."

As if in contempt of Fremont, General Price had lingered in Lexington nearly two weeks after he had captured it, and then began a slow retrograde movement, his trains loaded with spoils.

Fremont had enough soldiers in Missouri, if he had hurried to throw a large force in Price's rear and captured his whole army. But by the time he had consolidated his army and got ready to move, Price was a hundred miles away. He had captured Lexington, administering a crushing blow to the Union cause, and escaped unscathed.

When Lexington fell, President Lincoln telegraphed to Fremont. "I expect you to retrieve the disaster." But it was not to be. Fremont was not the general to do it.

The capture of Lexington was the crowning point in the career of General Price and, in the eyes of the Missouri secessionists, placed him among the greatest generals of the South.

It was a bright October morning when Lawrence and his company left Cameron for the long march south. It so happened that the first day proved an eventful one.

Along in the afternoon the troop was fired upon by a small party of guerillas, who took to flight

the moment they had delivered their fire. A head-long chase of some two miles took place but without results. On returning, Lawrence noticed that Lieutenant Bates and some six of the company were missing. Towards evening they joined the column loaded with plunder.

They told how a woman had cursed them as Yankees, and as much as confessed her husband was among the guerillas who had fired on them. "We learned her a lesson she'll not soon forget," chuckled one of the men. "We went through the house, took everything we wanted and then piled all the furniture up and made a bonfire. Ought to have burned the house over her head, but she begged so hard we spared it. I tell you we have tender hearts, have n't we, Bill?" addressing one of his companions.

"You bet," answered Bill, with a loud, coarse laugh.

Lawrence heard the story with a darkened brow. He ordered the company to fall in and then proceeded to give them a lecture they never forgot.

"We are not making war on women and children," he said, "nor do I intend to command a company of desperadoes. Nothing must be taken even from an enemy, except when in actual need for sustenance, and in no case must a house be entered for the purpose of plunder.

“Lieutenant Bates, you were with these men. I am surprised you allowed such a thing to be done.”

Bates had listened to Lawrence’s speech with a scowling face. “Do you mean to say,” he growled, “that you will allow no foraging on the enemy?”

“I mean to say,” coolly replied Lawrence, “that I will allow no homes to be plundered as if we were robbers instead of soldiers. And above all I will not allow women and children to be terrorized and insulted.”

“What will you do if we do n’t obey your pious orders?” sneered Bates.

“Arrest the first man who disobeys,” answered Lawrence. “Lieutenant Bates, you are under arrest for insubordination. Your sword, please.”

Instead of yielding his sword, Bates turned to the company and shouted, “Boys, are we to stand this? Are we to submit tamely and be bossed around by this young upstart? How many of us have had to flee from our homes to save our lives? Give the devils the same medicine they do us, I say, and I’ll be damned if I do n’t do it. Captain Middleton to the contrary.”

“That ’s the stuff, Jim. That ’s the stuff. We ’re with you,” shouted a dozen of the men.

“Lieutenant Bates, your sword.” The order came as sharp as steel.

Instead of yielding his sword, Bates drew it with

a flourish and shouted with an oath, "Come and get it, if you can."

As quick as a flash Lawrence covered him with his revolver. "Drop that sword, before I count three, or I fire."

Bates glanced at the company. Some eight or ten of the men made a movement as if to help him.

"The first man that moves from the ranks dies," said a cold, clear voice, and there by the side of Lawrence stood Morris, a cocked revolver in each hand.

The men stood as if rooted to the spot.

"One — two," counted Lawrence.

The sword of Lieutenant Bates fell to the ground.

"Now pick it up, return it to its scabbard, unbuckle your belt and deliver it to Sergeant Graves," commanded Lawrence.

With his face distorted with rage Bates obeyed the command.

Lawrence now turned to his men, as cool apparently as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

"Boys, we might just as well settle this now for good," he said. "You must be aware that for a soldier to mutiny is death. Fortunately for you, you have not yet been sworn into the United States service, and therefore I shall not hold you to strict military law. I did not wish to make real soldiers of you, until I proved each and every one of you.

To serve in this company you will not only have to be soldiers brave and true, but like the knights of old, scorn to do a mean act. And woman or child in your presence must be safe from insult or injury. Our enemies who have ceased to be soldiers and become murderers we must let the law deal with as their crimes deserve. Now if any of you feel that you cannot become such soldiers as I wish, you are at perfect liberty to go. If you stay I shall know you are with me in all things.

“Sergeant Graves, return the sword of Lieutenant Bates. These terms are made to him, as to all.”

Bates hesitated a moment, then took his sword and turning to Lawrence with a bow said mockingly, “Good-bye, Captain, to you and your Sunday School class. Boys, all of you who have any sand follow me. It’s to Lane or Montgomery; they are the boys to fight under.”

Ten of the company joined him as he rode away.

During the exciting minutes of the mutiny most of the company had stood as if spell bound, neither had Mark Marvin, the first lieutenant, offered to help quell the outbreak.

Lawrence now turned to him and said, “Well, Lieutenant, what of you? If you and the rest of the men wish to go, you have my consent.”

“This thing took me by surprise, Captain,” replied Marvin. “I reckon I should have helped you,

but what you ask is a little tough after all we have suffered at the hands of the bushwhackers. Still, I reckon you are right. You have the sand. Who would have thought you could make Jim Bates come down like that? I shall stay with you, and I hope the rest of the boys will."

"Thank you, Lieutenant," answered Lawrence. "It is just what I expected of you. As to my dealings with the bushwhackers, you need have no fears, but to pillaging, or burning houses which shelter women and children I object."

"You can count on me, Captain," replied Marvin. "From now on I am with you heart and soul, and I reckon the men will be. How is it, boys?"

The men raised a cheer. "We're with the Captain," they shouted.

Lawrence noticed that three or four of the men did not join in the cheering. "They'll be missing by morning," he thought.

As soon as Lawrence met Morris alone he grasped him by the hand. "I hardly know how to thank you," he exclaimed, "but for you, that affair might have ended much differently."

"Bah! that Bates is a coward at heart, in spite of all his boasting," replied Morris, "but there was something to fear from the men. I saw by their looks that some of them meant to support Bates. It's all over now, though, you'll have no more

trouble. Not a man in the company but fears and respects you."

Among the men that night there was many a heated argument, but they all agreed it would not do to fool with the young captain. Like all soldiers they admired bravery, and the action of Lawrence had won their hearts.

In the morning, as Lawrence expected, he found five more of the men missing. This left him only thirty-five.

"Boys, I would rather have you only thirty-five," he said, "than a regiment of such as have left. There is not a man among you, but I know I can trust."

The march was without incident during the day until late in the afternoon, when Lawrence, who was scouting some distance in advance of the column passed a house where two men stood by the fence watching him.

"Any Rebs around?" asked Lawrence.

"Yep, I'm one," answered one of the men.

"Well, my friend, you're honest anyway," laughed Lawrence.

"Reckon you will steal everything I have," said the fellow.

"Not as bad as that," replied Lawrence, "if you behave yourself. But there is a column of infantry behind, and you had better not be quite so out-

spoken; and if you have any nice fat pigs you had better not let them run around the soldiers' legs. It might be bad for the pigs."

"Reckon I had better get them pigs out of the way," he drawled, and started across the road, where a rude barn stood with several pigs rutting around it.

"Say, Cap, my name is Hank Wilson and I'm no Reb," whispered the man when out of hearing of his companion. "I have to pretend to be, to live here. Tom Proctor and his band of guerillas left here not an hour ago. He said they were going for old man Semans who lives about four miles from here. Claimed Semans had been informing on them."

"How many in the gang?" asked Lawrence.

"'Bout seventy, I would say."

"And where does this Semans live?"

"First road to the left, 'bout four miles. How many men have you?"

"Thirty-five."

"Never do to attack Proctor with that number. His men are devils."

"What does Proctor intend to do with Semans?" asked Lawrence.

"Shoot or hang him," drawled the man.

"If Proctor had twice seventy men I would try and save Semans. There is a strong column of

infantry behind to fall back upon. Thank you for your information. If it is false, you will hear from me."

Lawrence gave the command and the troop galloped away. Wilson stood and watched them and saw they turned down the road to Semans's. "The fool," he muttered. "Proctor will eat that squad up. Precious little good the infantry behind will do. But I have it. I will save him if I can. I like his looks."

Apparently forgetting his hogs he went back to where his companion was still leaning on the fence watching Lawrence and his men. "Say, Dave, that young chap will get into trouble," he grinned.

"He will run right into Proctor, and not one of them will get back alive."

"Do n't know about that, Dave, I reckon it's Proctor had better look out," answered Wilson. "You had better git ahead of them fellers and warn him. The boys will be so busy with Semans they won't keep a sharp lookout."

"What do you mean?" asked Dave in surprise.

"I pumped that young captain. He's rather green, and there is hundreds of Yanks just behind. They know all about Proctor being in the neighborhood and have sent a strong column to cut him off. This gang will make a feint of engaging him and then come back with a rush. By that time the place

will be swarming with Yanks, and Proctor will be in a trap. By —! here come the Yanks now.”

“I ’m off,” cried Dave. “My hoss is in the barn and I can ride through the field and head them Yanks off and warn Proctor.”

“Just the thing, Dave. Hurry up.”

In less than two minutes Dave was on his horse and riding as if for his life through the fields to get ahead of Lawrence and his men.

CHAPTER XI

A FIGHT WITH GUERILLAS

WHEN out of sight of the house Lawrence halted his troop and explained the situation to them. "The guerillas are two to one," he said. "Boys, shall we attack or not?"

"Attack!" shouted every one of the men.

"Then we must surprise them if possible. Hold your fire until close, give them a volley from your carbines, and then use your revolvers. Keep cool, take good aim, and make every shot count."

They had gone about three miles when Mark Marvin who was riding by the side of Lawrence, said. "I hear firing. See there's smoke from a burning building. The devils are at their work."

"Forward! Gallop!" shouted Lawrence.

Just then a lone horseman was seen in a large field to their left. His horse was at full speed and he was apparently trying to gain the road in advance of them. Lawrence took a quick look at him through his field glasses.

"The fellow who was leaning on the fence in front of Wilson's," he exclaimed. "He is going to

warn Proctor, and he is nearly a quarter of a mile ahead of us."

Lawrence was right, and the man came into the road some four hundred yards in advance of them. Two or three shots were fired at him but without effect.

"Do n't waste time. Forward!" shouted Lawrence, and the party dashed forward in a wild chase.

The report of fire arms in front was now plainly heard and in a moment more the scene of conflict came into view. Smoke was rolling from the house and from a big barn. The fire of the guerillas seemed to be directed against the barn.

The man ahead was now riding like mad, swinging his hat and shouting, "Run! Run! The Yanks are on you."

Just then there burst out of the burning barn a man, a boy and a large dog. The man and boy both fired and two of the guerillas dropped, but a second later the man threw up his arms and fell on his face.

"Charge!" shouted Lawrence, and with a cheer the troop swept forward.

The guerillas, taken by surprise and not knowing the number attacking them, scattered like a pack of scared wolves. Dave Calloway, the man who rode to give the warning, lingered a moment too long; with an angry roar the dog was on him, fastening his teeth in his throat. The troop gave the fleeing

guerillas a parting volley and one was seen to reel in his saddle.

Both house and barn were now a roaring mass of flames. A woman with a terrified child clinging to her crept out from some shrubbery where they had taken refuge.

Her eyes fell on the dead body of her husband and with a heart-breaking cry she threw herself on him, covering his face with kisses.

The boy, who was a fine manly looking fellow of about sixteen years of age, had been badly burned, but he tried to comfort his mother and little sister, not heeding his own suffering.

Three of the guerillas were dead and one badly wounded. So wrought up by the scene were some of the men that they were on the point of killing the wounded one when Lawrence interfered. "Never let it be said," he exclaimed, "that one of my troop ever killed a wounded man, no matter what his crimes may have been."

Harry Semans gave Lawrence an account of the affair. "My father a few days ago sent me to Cameron," he said, "to inform the commanding officer there of the depredations of Proctor's gang. In some way Proctor found it out, probably through that scoundrel there," pointing to the body of Calloway, who lay, a dreadful object, with his throat all torn. "He pretended to be a friend of father's,

but I always mistrusted him for a spy; and Bruno, our dog, could never bear him. Dad and I saw them coming and we grabbed our guns and rushed to the barn where we had two horses standing saddled, ready for just such emergencies, for he had received warning that Proctor had vowed vengeance on Dad. But they were too quick for us and we saw all we could do was to sell our lives as dearly as possible. We killed two of them and that made them careful, but they sneaked around and fired the barn. We stood it as long as we could, and then rushed out, thinking it better to die by bullets than be burned to death. We got two more as we came out, but they got poor Dad. But it is n't over yet, I'll have my revenge."

The boy's eyes flashed as he stood clutching his rifle, looking upon the scene of death and destruction around him.

A white-haired, patriotic-looking man now came riding up. Dismounting he introduced himself as a Mr. Piper, a near neighbor. "I feared this," he said, "and told Mr. Semans weeks ago he had better leave the country, but he would not listen."

"Then you are one of those who though taking no part in such damnable outrages as this, aid and protect the villains who do," replied Lawrence hotly.

The old gentleman flushed and drawing himself

up proudly said, "I will not deny, suh, that I am for the South. I am a slave-holder and believe slavery is right. I have two sons with Price, but, suh, they are honorable soldiers. I do not believe in such warfare as this but what can I do, suh?"

"The action of the Yankee Government has let loose the poor white trash of the State, and in the name of the South they kill and plunder. It would be as much as my life is worth to refuse to feed them if they demanded food, suh. It was but three days ago that this same gang of Proctor's took two of my best horses and I dare not say a word, suh, not a word."

"Pardon me," replied Lawrence. "I am afraid I judged you harshly. But what is to become of this poor family?"

"My roof will protect the woman and the child, suh, until we see what can be done," answered the old gentleman.

Lawrence grasped his hand. "Would that all our enemies were like you," he exclaimed, "surely much of the horrors of war would be mitigated."

Mrs. Semans was now consulted. She said she had relatives living in Illinois and she and the children would go to them. "We have a little money," she said. "We buried it when these troublesome times came, so it is safe."

Just then a squad of horsemen came galloping up.

The officer in command said Wilson had told the colonel of the near proximity of Proctor's gang and of Lawrence's pursuit.

"We feared for your safety," said the officer, "so the colonel halted his columns and a strong force of infantry is now marching to your relief."

"Go and turn them back," said Lawrence. "Tell the Colonel I am very much obliged, but that I am all right. It is useless to try to catch Proctor with infantry. Tell him to move on and I will join the column sometime during the night, or early in the morning."

"Very well," said the officer. "We were somewhat worried, for Wilson said Proctor had twice as many men as you."

"I don't know how many of the gang there were," replied Lawrence. "They got away too quickly to see. It is a pity we did not get here a few minutes quicker for we could have saved this man's life."

"You did well as it is, but I must go and turn the infantry back; so good-bye and be careful that Proctor don't come back at you."

Morris now called Lawrence one side and proposed a most daring scheme. He would impersonate a Confederate scout, tell Proctor of the smallness of the Federal force, and advise him to attack. In the meantime Lawrence could prepare an am-

buscade, and deal Proctor a blow that he would remember.

At first Lawrence strongly objected on account of the danger Morris would run, but he merely shrugged his shoulders, remarking, "No danger, no excitement." So Lawrence reluctantly gave his consent.

Much to the amazement of the men Morris now rode away alone. Lawrence gave his attention to the dead, who were decently interred. The wounded guerilla was taken to the home of Mr. Piper. He was greatly surprised at the mercy shown him and feebly taking Lawrence's hand whispered, "If I live I will remember this."

Lawrence thought little of this at the time, but later he had cause to remember it.

The money which Mr. Semans had buried was dug up and given to the widow. Now the unexpected happened. The boy Harry Semans refused to go with his mother. "Mother, you and Ella go to Illinois and be safe," he exclaimed. "But I am not going to run away. I am going to stay and fight these hounds, I and Bruno, here," and he patted the dog's head.

The mother with tears begged him to come. "You and Ella are all I have now," she sobbed.

The boy pointed to the fresh earth heaped above his father. "Mother," and his voice trembled with

passion, "do you not want to be revenged? If I live I will have ten lives for his."

Harry then went to Lawrence. "Captain, please let me go with you," he begged, "me and Bruno, here."

"I might take you," said Lawrence, "but what can I do with Bruno?" and he looked at the great dog, which was half mastiff and half Newfoundland.

"Bruno knows more than many men," said Harry. "I believe he is half human. On a scout he would be worth ten men. If Dad and I had heeded his warning to-day we could have got away. I would like to go with you, Captain, but if you will not take Bruno there is no use talking."

"Very well," replied Lawrence smiling, "I will try you and the dog."

It was a sad parting between Harry and his mother and little sister, but it was over at last. "I will be happy, mother," were the parting words of the boy, "knowing that you and Ella are safe."

Lawrence now assembled the troops together, telling them he would select a good position and await the return of Morris who had gone on a scout. "If he does not return by dark," he said, "we are to wait no longer, but rejoin the column."

A good position was selected, pickets sent out to guard against surprise and the return of Morris

awaited. Would he return? That question caused Lawrence many forebodings.

When Morris left the troop he rode straight down the road over which the guerillas had retreated. He expected to overtake some of them, and was not disappointed. After going some three miles he came to a squad of men who seemed to be guarding a road which led to the left. They halted him, roughly asking who he was and where he was going.

"Be you 'ns some of Proctor's men who had a fight back heah?" drawled Morris.

"What of it? Who do yo 'un know about it?" demanded one of the men fiercely.

"Do n't blame you for being mad," continued Morris. "It makes me mad to think of you 'ns running away from less than half your number. If you 'ns do n't go back and whip them fellers, you 'ns are not the men I take you to be?"

"Look heah, stranger," said one of the men. "Thar was a whole regiment of them Yanks what came for we 'uns. I seen hundreds."

Morris laughed, "Instead of seeing double, you must have seen ten at least where there was but one. I counted them. Thar was about thirty. Whar is Captain Proctor?"

"Thar he is connig now," exclaimed one of the men, pointing to a horseman coming down the road.

As Proctor came up Morris coolly saluted him and said, "Captain, allow me to introduce myself. I am Charles Morris, scout and spy for General Price. I've been up in some of the north counties trying to get recruits for Price."

"Cap, he says thar was only thirty of them Yanks that run us away from Semans's," spoke up one of the men.

Proctor turned on Morris, his face red with anger. "What do you know about Semans's?" he demanded. "Who are you, anyway? Show me your credentials. How do I know but what you're a sneaking spy? Dave Calloway warned us and he never would have told us to run from thirty Yanks."

"Dave will never warn you again," replied Morris.

"Why? By—! I've a mind to shoot you. You know too much."

"I would n't if I were you. It might get you into trouble," said Morris coolly. "Read that." Morris took off his hat and from under the band took the pass he had received from General Price. Morris rightly guessed that the news of his true character had not reached northern Missouri.

Proctor read it with a frowning face.

"You see, Captain, if you put me out of the way you might have to settle with Price," said Morris

mildly. "But I do n't blame you for being cautious. Now let me explain. There is a large body of Yankee infantry over on the main road, about four miles from here. Dave Calloway thought they had sent a column to cut you off and that the men who attacked you were only a blind to get you to follow them. That big dog of Semans's killed Dave. Tore his throat all to pieces. That is the reason I told you he would never warn you again.

"Now as to how I come to know all this. I have important despatches for General Price and must reach him as soon as possible. I expected to be in Richmond by this time. I came nearly running into those Yankees over on the other road, so switched over on this one. That fight of yours made me suspicious. I stopped at a Mr. Piper's. He's all right."

"Yes, I know him," growled Proctor.

"Well, he told me he would go and see what the trouble was. He was gone quite a long time and when he returned told me all about the fight. Said he counted the Yanks and there were just thirty of them. He was all cut up about you fellows running away."

"Now, do n't stick it in a fellow too hard," said Proctor. "We did n't see those fellows until they were on us and we did n't know but what there were a thousand of them. And then there was Dave yelling like mad for us to get."

“Yes, I know,” answered Morris, “but if I were you I would come back at those Yanks, and come strong. Piper says the captain in command of the Yanks is a young chap, and that he is all swelled up over his victory, and that he is going to camp at Semans’s to-night, send for more troops and hunt you up to-morrow.”

“He is, is he?” exclaimed Proctor, his eyes gleaming with hate. “I will have something to say. You are sure thar’s only thirty.”

“That’s what Piper says,” answered Morris. “I would give anything to stay and see the fun, but I must be in Richmond to-night.”

“Hold on, stranger,” said Proctor as Morris started to ride away. “You have not told us how you avoided them Yanks.”

“Oh! Piper showed me a cut through the woods and I came out into the road this side of them.”

“All right. Wish you could stay and see the fun. I would like to have you see the way we will chew them Yanks up.”

“Hang those you do n’t kill,” yelled Morris as he galloped away.

“Now to get back,” muttered Morris, “or I may have done more harm than good.” He stopped long enough to take from the roll behind his saddle a wig and mustaches and after they had been adjusted, Captain Proctor would hardly have taken

him for the same person with whom he had just talked.

Morris's plan was to take the first road to the right and ride until he came to a road leading north, then on that until he came to the road they had come over during the day. This would give him several miles of extra travel and it was already getting late, so he urged his horse to a stiff gallop.

People rushed out of their houses to gaze after him as he galloped past. Those he met shouted and asked him what was up. One took a shot at him after he had passed. At last he overtook a party of three who showed that they meant to give him trouble.

"What's the hurry, stranger?" they shouted. "Hold on and tell us."

"No time," said Morris.

"Take time and that mighty quick," exclaimed one reaching for his pistol and attempting to block Morris's way. He was too slow. Morris's revolver spoke and the man tumbled from his horse. The other two fired, but their horses had shied at the sound of Morris's revolver and their shots went wild. Morris turned in his saddle and fired again and another saddle was empty. The remaining man had no stomach to follow one whose aim was so true, and gave up the pursuit.

"Whew! that was a close shave," laughed Mor-

ris. "Most excitement I've had for some time. This is living."

The sun was sinking to rest when Morris rode his reeking horse into camp.

"Never more glad to see you in my life," said Lawrence as he grabbed his hand. "I began to fear for your safety."

"I'm all right," said Morris. "Had one or two close calls. Tell you about it when I have time, but get ready for a fight. Proctor and his men will call on you to-night and you want to give him a warm reception."

Lawrence had not been idle while Morris was gone. He had looked over the ground and selected a place for an ambushade about three-fourths of a mile from where the troop was camped. Here the road ran down a hill and was dug out a few feet. Each side was fringed with a thick growth of bushes. Horsemen would find it almost impossible to turn out of the road. They would have to go ahead or turn back.

One old building on Semans's farm had not been burned. In it was plenty of forage for the horses, and Lawrence had camped his troop around it.

As soon as it was dark, leaving his camp fires burning, Lawrence moved his troop to the place of ambushade. Every detail was carefully arranged. The horses were left in the rear, close to open fields

which led to the road over which they would wish to retreat. Fences were let down so as to have an open way. Half a dozen of the men were left with the horses and the rest stationed a few yards apart in the bushes along the sides of the road.

Lawrence's orders were, "Not a whisper, not the slightest move. At the command 'Fire,' pour in a volley from your carbines, and then give them the six shots from your navies. Do n't wait for results. As soon as your revolvers are empty, make a break for the horses, when there reload your weapons and await further orders. Above all things keep cool and fire low."

So there in the darkness of the night with every nerve strained to the utmost tension, the twenty-five men waited the coming of more than thrice their number.

Tom Proctor, the captain of the guerillas, watched Morris as he rode out of sight, in an amiable frame of mind. "Thinks we 're cowards, does he?" he growled. "Boys, we 'll show him. But why was he so anxious for us to attack the Yanks? Wish I had kept him. It may be a Yankee trick to draw us into a trap, and that fellow may be no spy of Price's at all. I do n't like the idea of that infantry being so near."

The matter was discussed with his men and it was decided to send out spies to learn the situation.

They were to learn as near as possible the number in the troop and if they were going to camp on the Semans's place. They were to see Piper if they could, and find if Morris had talked to him as he claimed.

Four men were sent to locate the infantry.

Proctor decided to make no movement until all these men had reported.

It was nearly dark before the men came in. The three sent to spy on Lawrence were first to return. They reported they had found things about as Morris said. The troop was camped by the old barn on the Semans place, and it looked as if they intended to stay there for the night as the horses were being fed, and the men were cooking their suppers. They had never been able to count more than twenty men at one time, but there were some on picket, and there was a guard at Piper's, so it was probable the number was between thirty and forty. Owing to the guard around Piper's they could not get to him, and find out if Morris had seen and talked to him.

"The fellow's story seems to be as straight as a string," said Proctor. "But what puzzles me is that little company of cavalry camping so unconcernedly near us. That captain must be a fool if he has no support near. I will wait and hear about the infantry before I make a move."

In about half an hour the four sent to locate the

infantry returned and with them about a dozen more who had come "to have a hand in the fun," they said. They reported the infantry at least eight miles away and preparing to go into camp. They could discover no scouting parties out. But a strange thing had happened. A lone horseman riding furiously had passed up the road leading west. One of the men who had come in with them had tried to stop him, had even fired at him, but he paid no attention. Shortly afterwards the fellow had met Steve Holcomb, Bob Avery, and Jim Holmes, who ordered him to stop. He shot and killed Holcomb, badly wounded Avery and got away. Instead of keeping straight on he took the first road to the north. That was a lonely road and they lost track of him.

Proctor was much excited when he heard this. "You say one of the boys who came in with you saw and shot at him?" he asked.

"Yes, Dan Hebron, heal he is."

"Dan, what did he look like?"

Dan ejected a huge quid of tobacco, and drawled, "He was a young fellow dressed in a gray suit and rode a bay hoss, and a mighty good hoss it was, too."

"Black hair and smooth face?" asked Proctor growing more excited every minute.

"Do n't know about the hair, pears it was light,

but he had a mustache, a fine one. I'm sure of that."

Proctor gave a sigh of relief. "I was almost certain it was that spy," he exclaimed, "but it can't be, for he had no mustache. Reckon it will be safe to go for them Yanks."

With the reinforcements he had received Proctor now had nearly seventy men, and he saw no chance of failure. The only question was whether to attack at once or wait till morning. It was argued that the Yanks might be away by morning, so it was decided to attack at once.

The men fed their horses and then prepared their suppers in high glee. Quite a discussion arose among them as to how to dispose of the prisoners they might capture, would it be best to shoot or hang them. It was put to vote and hanging had the majority. At last all was ready and with oath and jest they started on their devilish mission.

When Lawrence posted his men Harry Semans begged to be one of the number, but Bruno refused to leave him.

"We can't have the dog," said Lawrence, "he might betray us to the enemy before we are ready."

"Never fear," replied Harry. "Bruno will keep as still as a mouse if I tell him to. And if the guerrillas come he will be the first to warn us of their coming."

So Lawrence permitted the dog to stay with the boy and he never had cause to regret it. The minutes passed slowly by and ten o'clock came. Bruno who was lying beside his young master suddenly raised his head sniffed the air and uttered a low growl.

Harry put his hand on the dog's head. "Keep quiet," he whispered. "Lie still." The dog sank down but Harry felt him quivering with suppressed excitement.

Lawrence was close to Harry and the boy whispered, "Captain, they are coming."

The word was passed softly along the line. Soon the tramping of horses could be heard and through the gloom the shadowy forms of horsemen could be seen.

The horsemen halted just as they reached the right of Lawrence's line and one was heard to say, "I can see the faint reflection of their fire, so I reckon they 're thar yet. Better tell the captain."

Proctor came up, saw the reflection of the smouldering camp fire and gave orders for the column to close up.

When this was done he said to his advance guard, "Ride on until you are challenged by their outpost. Then charge at once. The whole column will be close behind. Go through them like a whirlwind. Spare none."

Lawrence heard these orders and all pity left his heart. The men heard and some trembled, but others gritted their teeth and grimly waited for the order to fire.

The advance guard was allowed to pass by, but when the head of the column reached the left of the Union line, suddenly, as if a bolt had fallen from Heaven, there rang out sharply the command, "Fire."

The word had hardly left Lawrence's lips when twenty-five carbines blazed. Then came the sharp crack of the six-shooters in quick succession.

The scene in the road must have been awful. Groans, curses and shrieks of terror filled the air. Riderless horses reared and plunged trampling on the dead and living. The road was filled with fallen horses and men, the living, the dead and the wounded, mixed in one horrible mass. Hardly a shot was fired in return. The only thought of those who could was to get away.

As the last revolver shot died away, the men true to orders broke for the horses. Here they rallied and to his joy Lawrence found that not a man was missing.

The troop rode away unmolested and by two o'clock had joined the infantry column.

Of the guerillas fully one-half had been killed and wounded, and those who escaped fled terror-

stricken, many of them abandoning their horses and taking to the woods.

Captain Proctor was among those killed, but there were others to take his place as cruel and as bloodthirsty as he.

CHAPTER XII

THE CAPTURE OF LEXINGTON

THE infantry was a little late in starting that morning, which gave Lawrence and his tired troopers a much needed rest. When the result of the encounter with Proctor's gang was known, Lawrence and his men were saluted with cheer after cheer, Lawrence was warmly congratulated by the colonel in charge of the column.

Just as the force was about to move, a courier escorted by a squad of cavalry arrived from Cameron with peremptory orders for the infantry to return at once. Guerillas had again commenced their depredations on the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, tearing it up in several places, and the force was needed to protect it. Amid groans and curses the infantry was faced about to retrace their weary steps.

"Of course you will go with us," said the colonel to Lawrence. "It would be madness for you to proceed with your small force."

The orders for the infantry to turn back came as a cruel blow to Lawrence. He knew if he went

back, it meant he could take no part in the forward movement against Price. A battle might be fought any day. He was aware that Price had fallen back from Lexington before he left St. Louis; that Fremont had organized his army in four grand divisions, one at Jefferson City, one at Rolla, one at Tipton and one at Sedalia, and that these divisions were to concentrate at Warsaw, where it was expected to force Price to battle.

Lawrence had no thought but that Lexington had by this time been occupied by Federal troops from Kansas City, and as he was now only a day's march from Lexington he believed there would be little danger in his proceeding to that place. Once there he could decide his farther course.

These ideas he imparted to the colonel but that officer shook his head. "You are mistaken," he said, "in thinking that our forces occupy Lexington. When Price retreated south many companies of State Guards did not go with him but remained. To these add the numerous guerilla bands, and it is estimated that there is a force of at least two thousand Rebels in and around Lexington. My orders were to proceed to Lexington and disperse this force. Now I am ordered back, what chance have you to proceed with your thirty-odd men? You would simply be committing suicide."

Lawrence called his men together, presented the

facts to them and said he would be guided by their opinion.

Some of the men, elated by their victory over Proctor, were for going on. "We can whip any band we meet," they argued, "and, as for Lexington, we can go around that."

Others of the men demurred, and a hot discussion arose. Charles Morris who sat on his horse by the side of Lawrence had listened quietly to the discussion, but so far had not said a word. Lawrence now turned to him and said, "Morris, what is your opinion?"

"There is but one way for us to go ahead," he said.

"How is that?" asked Lawrence.

"Turn Rebels, represent ourselves as a company of State Guards on our way to join Price."

The idea took like wildfire among the men. It was just such an adventure as appealed to them.

"Then you believe such a plan feasible?" asked Lawrence.

"Yes, but it has many elements of danger. Our true characters might be discovered," said Morris.

"Let's try it anyway," shouted the men.

"You fellows seem anxious to put your heads in a noose," replied Morris. "A single word from anyone of you might betray us. Every man would have to know just what to say, our stories would

have to agree. In the first place we shall have to agree just where the troop was raised."

"The truth could be told there," spoke up Mark Marvin. "In the northwestern part of the State. A few of the boys are from Kansas."

"Are you well enough acquainted in your part of the State to answer questions correctly?" asked Morris.

"Certainly, I can tell all about Gentry, Buchanan, and DeKalb Counties and there are boys here who can speak for other counties."

"Let me say a word," spoke up Lawrence. "I certainly could not answer questions that might be asked me, for I am totally unacquainted with that portion of the county. For the time being I will yield the command to Lieutenant Marvin, and take my place in the ranks. Let Sergeant Miller take Marvin's place as lieutenant, for I understand he is well acquainted throughout that whole section."

"A sensible idea," replied Morris. "Next I must get another horse. If we should meet any of Proctor's men they would spot this one as soon as they laid eyes on it. It would also be best for me to change my dress and appearance somewhat."

"Anything you wish, Morris," said Lawrence. "Remember you will really be the commander if we make this attempt, and we shall be guided by you."

"After some discussion it was unanimously de-

cided to go forward. When Lawrence informed the colonel of this decision he was not only astonished but angry.

"I cannot, as your superior officer, permit this," he exclaimed. "I command you to return with me."

"You forget, Colonel, that I command an independent company. Let us talk this over. I do not believe that the undertaking is as dangerous as you believe."

Lawrence then unfolded the whole plan to him. The colonel listened attentively, and then said, "Perhaps you may be able to get through all right, but it is a dare-devil undertaking. Morris, that scout of yours, is a wonder. The way he led Proctor into a trap shows that. I shall not oppose you further, but remember it is against my best judgment."

"Thank you, Colonel," replied Lawrence. "If we come to grief it will be through no fault of yours."

Lawrence then explained to the colonel Morris's wish to change horses.

"That fellow thinks of everything," said the colonel, "but he is right."

The colonel called his sergeant major to him, "Riley, you have a good horse, have you not?"

"A dandy, Colonel, — can outrun anything in the regiment."

“Sorry, but I wish you to exchange with Morris, that scout of Captain Middleton’s.”

Riley at first strongly demurred, but when the facts were presented to him he yielded saying, “Bedad! I’ll do anything for the fellow that fooled Proctor.”

So the exchange was made and Morris found himself in possession of a fine gray instead of a bay. He also exchanged coats with one of the boys who did not look in the least like him, and put on a mustache that turned up at the ends instead of drooping. “I reckon they will have hard work to place me now,” he remarked with a smile.

The troop looked on his metamorphosis with wonder. “Blast me!” said Marvin. “I would n’t know him myself.”

Adieus were now said, and in parting, the colonel, wringing Lawrence’s hand said in a broken voice, “Captain, may you get through all right, but I never expect to see you again.”

There was not a man in that infantry force but thought that the little troop of cavalry was going to its destruction. But the troop thought differently and turned southward with smiling faces and brave hearts.

“Which would you advise?” asked Marvin who had now taken command of the troop. “Shall we go to Richmond or around it?”

“Straight for Richmond,” answered Morris. “The boldest course is now the safest.”

Straight for Richmond they rode, and when they passed a house where a Confederate flag was flying, they would cheer for Jeff Davis and General Price, and the women would answer with waving handkerchiefs and cries of encouragement.

Single horsemen and now and then groups of three or four were passed, and to all they had to explain who they were and where they were going.

Now they began to hear rumors of the defeat of Proctor and that there was a large Yankee force advancing on Richmond, and many were the questions asked of them.

To these questions they answered they had slipped by an infantry force by going to the west, but of Proctor's fight they knew nothing.

The dog Bruno was the cause of numerous questions. “That dawg,” answered Marvin, “can smell a Yank farther than any dawg yo'un have can smell a nigger. We'uns can sleep when he is on guard.”

When Richmond was reached and it became known who they were, they were given an ovation. Food and drink were given the men and Marvin was invited to enjoy the hospitality of one of the finest homes in the city.

But rumors began to fly thick and fast. Two or

three of Proctor's men had come in, telling how their command had been ambushed by a whole regiment of Yankees and how Proctor had been led into the trap by a young man who claimed to be a spy for General Price.

Then came the news of an infantry column, and the whole town was in a panic.

"We had better get out of here," whispered Lawrence to Marvin. "I am afraid some of Proctor's men will come who will recognize Harry Semans and his dog."

So thanking the people for their hospitality and saying that it was imperative for them to reach Lexington as soon as possible, the troop moved on.

"I feel better," said Morris to Lawrence. "Captain, we were in more danger than you thought. I mingled with the crowd. One of Proctor's men noticed the dog and swore it was Semans's dog, he knew it was, and wondered how it came here. I reckon if we had stayed half an hour longer there would have been trouble."

The troop now rode forward rapidly and by sundown neared the river. It was thought best not to cross into Lexington until the next morning, therefore they went into camp in a secluded place among the bluffs, about half a mile from the road.

Morris signified his intention of crossing over into Lexington to find out the lay of the land.

One of the men wished to go with him, but Morris sternly refused, saying that in case of trouble he would be a hindrance instead of a help, and rode away alone.

"A queer fellow," remarked Marvin to Lawrence.

"Yes, he never seems as happy as when on some dangerous undertaking."

"He ought to enjoy something," replied Marvin.

"He is as glum a looking young fellow as I ever saw. Looks as if he had no friend."

"He has one here," answered Lawrence warmly.

"As to that, we all swear by him," said Marvin. "Wonder what makes him look so sad. When there is a fight on he is a changed being. I shall never forget how he looked when he stood by your side at the time of the mutiny. Not a man but knew he would do just what he said he would."

"It would have been death if one had raised a finger to help Bates," said Lawrence. "I tell you Morris is a man one can tie to."

"That he is," answered the lieutenant heartily, "and all the boys know it."

It was not until the next day near ten o'clock that Morris returned. Lawrence had begun to be greatly worried.

"I found the city full of independent companies of State Guards to say nothing of guerillas," he told them. "I had no trouble, as men are constantly

coming and going. In all I believe there are at least two thousand of the State Guards and guerrillas in and around Lexington, and if we get through that place without trouble I shall be surprised, for when I mentioned that it would be a good thing for the different companies of Home Guards to get together and make their way south to join Price they took it as a joke.

“‘Do n’t you know,’ they exclaimed, ‘that Fremont’s army is squarely between us and Price? No one but a crazy man would think of taking a company through.’ So you see we may have some trouble.”

“Yet we must make the attempt,” said Lawrence.

“There is nothing else we can do,” answered Morris. “But I do n’t like the looks of things over there. Why, they would have hanged every Federal prisoner in the city last night, if it had not been for me.”

“How is that?” asked Lawrence, startled.

“They had heard of the advance of the Federal troops from Cameron and magnified the number five times. The news of the crushing defeat of Proctor had also been received, and it set them wild. It was rumored that Richmond was already in the hands of the Federals, and that Lexington would next be attacked. Therefore they decided to hang the prisoners, about twenty of them, I believe. Then they

were going to disperse into the county, and when the Yankees came, they would all be good, peaceable farmers.

“ I told them I had just come through Richmond, that it was all right, and that the Yankees instead of advancing had turned back, so Lexington was in no danger. I then told them that if they did hang the prisoners and the city was ever captured, the Yankees would take a fearful revenge on the place.

“ The guerillas cared little what became of the city, but a number of prominent citizens sided with me, and they promised to postpone the hanging for twenty-four hours. My statement that the Yankees were falling back was doubted, but two or three of Proctor’s men who had escaped came in, also some scouts and they verified my report and put me all right.

“ But say,” and Morris actually laughed, “ you ought to have heard Proctor’s men. They claimed they fought a force of over a thousand for two hours and it was not until nearly all of them were shot down that they retreated.

“ ‘ But the Yankees paid dearly for their fun,’ said one. ‘ Thar was at least two hundred of them killed and wounded.’ ”

“ Did they say anything of the spy who led them into the trap? ” asked Lawrence.

“ I never enjoyed anything in my life as I did

hearing those men cuss me. If they only had had me they would have put me to slow torture and danced around me like a pack of painted savages. And, to think I was there and heard it all. I tell you, it was glorious."

"It must have been," said Lawrence dryly, "but excuse me."

The question of moving now came up. Morris looked around and his eyes fell on Harry Semans and Bruno. His face clouded. "We can never get through with them," he exclaimed. "A number of Proctor's men are in the city and they would recognize both the boy and the dog."

He thought a moment and then said, "Perhaps I can fix the boy."

There happened to be a chokeberry bush growing close by, full of ripe berries. Calling Harry to him Morris stained one of his cheeks with the juice. It had the appearance of blood dried on. He then took a dirty handkerchief and bound it over one eye, concealing as much of the face as possible.

"Reckon that is all right, my boy. You can go," said Morris. "If anyone asks you how you got hurt tell them your horse threw you. As for Bruno we will have to leave him."

"What, leave Bruno? I can't. I can't."

"I am sorry, my boy, but it's that or hanging for us all."

"Let 's shoot him," said one of the men drawing his revolver.

"No, no," cried Harry. "Not that. I will send him away. He will mind me."

Seeing the distress of Harry, Lawrence told him if he was sure he could send the dog away, he should not be killed.

Harry took Bruno some distance away, in fact out of sight. He was gone some time and when he appeared, Bruno was not with him, nor was he when the troop reached the river.

They had to wait some time for a ferry, and by the time they could cross there was a motley crowd to go with them, and an inquisitive crowd it was too.

There were two men more inquisitive than the rest. Each had two huge navy revolvers strapped to him, and they went swaggering around boasting of their prowess and of the number of Yankees they had killed. One of them had his left arm in a sling.

It did not take Lawrence long to learn that they were members of Proctor's gang. Soon there was a crowd around them and one was giving his version of the fight.

"Thar must have been two thousand of the Yanks," he said. "We'uns had no chance."

"How did you come to get into such a trap?" asked one of the listeners.

"Come? Led into it by a sallow faced devil who

pretended to be a spy of General Price's. Proctor bit, never knew him to be fooled before. The fellow must be in league with Satan himself. He can take on as many forms as the evil one. Killed three men after he left Proctor. Did n't look like the same chap but rode the same hoss.

“Another queer thing, some of the boys swear they saw Semans's dog in Richmond yesterday. Semans is the old abolitionist we wiped out, and that is what brought on the fight. Now, how did that dog come in Richmond? Semans lived full ten miles from there.”

When Lawrence heard this, he saw how wise Morris had been in not allowing Bruno to accompany them.

When about half across the river their attention was attracted by the peculiar actions of a number of people who had been left standing on the bank which the boat had left. They were running and pointing to some object in the water. Lawrence looked and saw that either a man or beast was struggling in the river. He quickly brought his glass to bear, and gave a start as he looked. “It's Bruno,” he whispered to Morris, who stood by his side.

It was Bruno and nobly was he breasting the current of the river. He was a powerful swimmer and made rapid progress.

Morris never said a word but stood with compressed lips watching the progress of the dog. The boat was now nearing the bank and he suddenly drew his revolver and shot at the dog.

There were some who cried "Shame!" but the humor took the crowd and soon the bullets were falling thick and fast around Bruno. The crowd on the bank followed suit and there was a perfect fusillade. The dog seemed to realize his danger, for he turned and swam with the current and was soon out of range.

"A wise dog that," laughed some as they sheathed their weapons. The boat now landed and the incident was forgotten by the crowd but not by Lawrence's troops, and more than one wished that the dog still lived, even if his living brought them danger.

Hardly had the troop landed when they were surrounded by a crowd of hundreds, most of them armed. "Where were they from? Who were they? Where were they going?" were the questions put to them in rapid succession.

Marvin answered that they were from the northern part of the State and were on their way to join Price.

"Yes, yo 'uns will join Price with a vengeance," cried one. "Do yo 'uns know the whole Yankee army is between heah and Price?"

“ Better stay with we ’uns,” said another. “ Thar is lots of Yanks up heah to kill.”

Marvin drew himself proudly up. “ Boys, I would like to stay with you,” he said, “ but my men enlisted with the understanding I was to lead them to Price, the grandest man, the greatest general in the Confederacy, and there are not enough Yankees between here and him to prevent me.”

This sentiment took, and the air rang with cheers and cries of “ Bravo! We ’ll go with you.”

This was more than Marvin had bargained for, but he found when the shouting was over, they were not so anxious to go. Yet, no doubt the troop could have picked up a good many recruits.

So well were Marvin and the troop acquainted with the county from which they came that they were able to answer satisfactorily every question put to them.

Morris as usual had circulated among the crowd and he knew that every minute they stayed in Lexington was fraught with danger. But horses had to be fed, the haversacks of the men filled, and it was late in the afternoon before they could get away.

The troop was drawn up ready to start, a great crowd stood around them to see them off, when a man shouting and gesticulating furiously was seen,

trying to break through the ring of spectators which surrounded the troop.

"Do n't I know him?" he was shouting. "I tell you he is a Yank, a sneaking, contemptible Yank."

"Oh! shut up," yelled the crowd. "You're drunk."

"Drunk, am I?" he growled. "I'll show you," and striding up to Marvin peered into his face and said sneeringly, "Howdy, Mark Marvin. How long has it been since you turned Confied?"

Marvin turned pale. He knew the fellow well, but quickly collecting himself replied, "I do n't know you, my friend. My name is not Marvin. You are mistaken."

"Do n't know me, eh?" replied the man turning red with anger. "Well I know yo'un was with Colonel Cranor up in Gentry. Yo'un helped bring a lot of Yanks from Iowa, and run me and lots of others out of the county."

There was not a man in the troop but felt that his death warrant was being read as they listened to that conversation.

Lawrence turned his horse in the direction he wished to go.

"You dirty, lying scoundrel, take back your words or I will run you through," cried Marvin whipping out his sword.

This created a diversion and some of the crowd began to cheer.

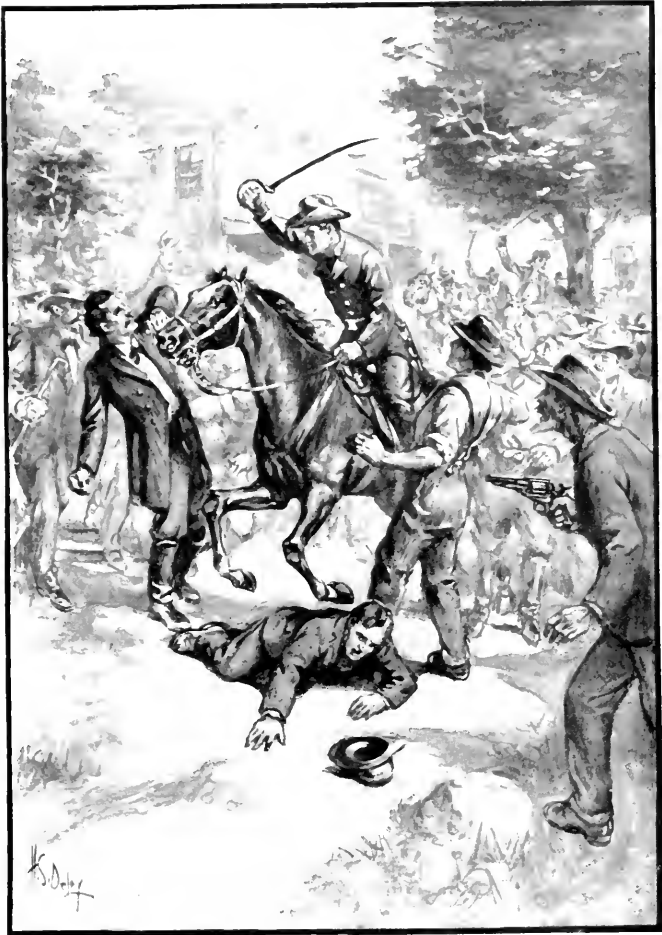
“Boys, follow me! Charge!” shouted Lawrence as he drew his sword, the sword of Bunker Hill, given him by his uncle. Straight through the crowd he rode, striking right and left, his horses trampling and knocking down those who could not get out of the way. With cries of terror the crowd surged backwards, crushing down the weak.

After Lawrence thundered the troop, leaving behind them the crushed and bleeding forms of those they had ridden over. In three seconds it was all over; they had broken through the ring of spectators, and were away. So sudden, so unexpected had been the onslaught that not a shot was fired until the troop had broken through the crowd, then revolvers began to crack, but the shots were wild and did no harm.

With cries of rage the guerillas made a wild rush for their horses, and soon an irregular line of horsemen were streaming after the fugitives.

The question with Lawrence was, could the troop keep up its terrific pace until darkness came and covered their retreat? Already some of the foremost of the pursuers were pressing them close, and they would have to be checked and that meant a halt.

But Morris had already noticed the danger. He



Straight through the crowd he rode, striking right and left

fell in the rear of the troop and allowed the foremost of the pursuers to come within range, then he raised his carbine and fired, and his shot went true. This checked the pursuit for a moment, but soon fifteen or twenty mounted on the fleetest horses had gathered and on they came yelling like fiends.

The scouts could go only as fast as the slowest horse could travel, for Lawrence refused to leave any of his men behind. Leaving Marvin to lead the troop he fell to the rear and as he did so, called out the names of four of his men, who he knew had good horses, to fall out with him, and at the same time asking one of the other men for his carbine.

Lawrence now found himself in the rear with Morris and the four men. The pursuers were gaining rapidly.

"We must stop them or all is lost," he exclaimed to Morris.

"The first place where they cannot see how many have halted," he said.

The place soon came. They rode over the brow of a hill and for a moment were out of sight. "Halt," ordered Lawrence. "Hart, you hold the horses, the rest come with me." The five ran back where they could look over the brow of the hill. They were none too soon, the foremost of the enemy was not ten rods away.

"Take good aim and fire," shouted Lawrence.

The carbines blazed and the foremost horses went down. Two of the riders lay still. Their navies were as good as rifles at that range and the five poured in a volley of balls.

The enemy beat a hurried retreat, then rallied and began to return the fire. Lawrence and his men were lying down and were firing deliberately and with effect. The enemy, which had now grown to number at least fifty, fell back a short distance and many of them were seen to be dismounting. Lawrence knew what that meant, a detachment was to steal through the woods and flank him.

“One more volley and go,” he ordered.

The volley was given, then running back they sprang on their horses and were away.

This affair so checked the pursuit that it gave the troop a good start.

Hardly had Lawrence joined his men when Marvin called him and pointed to the front where a cloud of dust was arising. Soon they made out a body of cavalry.

They looked at each other with white faces. If the cavalry were enemies, and of this they had little doubt, there was no hope.

“All we can do is to sell our lives as dearly as possible,” said Marvin. “To be taken alive would mean an ignominious death.”

“You are right” replied Lawrence and he called

a halt. "Men," he exclaimed, and his voice rang out without a tremor, "that force in front is without doubt the enemy. You know what it means to be taken alive. I will order a charge and let each man die fighting. We can die as soldiers, but never as felons."

"Hold," cried Morris. "Those men do not ride as guerillas do. There is discipline there. See they have halted. They take us for enemies."

"I believe you are right, I will investigate," replied Lawrence, tying a handkerchief to the point of his sword he rode forward. A fine looking officer rode out to meet him. When they came face to face Lawrence fairly gathered the officer in his arms. "Major Frank White of the Prairie Scouts, as I live," he shouted. "Major, you do not know how glad I am to see you. You have saved our bacon."

"Can this be Lieutenant Middleton, once of General Lyon's staff?" asked the Major, nearly wringing Lawrence's hand off.

"The same, Major. What fortunate circumstance brings you here?"

"I might ask that of you," replied the Major laughing. "Give an account of yourself."

Just then shots were heard. The pursuers had come up, and were exchanging compliments with Lawrence's men.

“I will, Major,” said Lawrence, when you drive back those hounds who have been chasing us.”

Quickly the major gave the order; but the Confederates had seen them and were now scurrying back to Lexington as fast as their horses could carry them, taking with them the direful tidings that a large force of Yankees were near and would be in the city by morning.

Terror and consternation reigned. Most of the State Guards fled from the city during the night. Many were in favor of hanging the prisoners before they left, but the citizens told them it meant the destruction of the city if they did, and in all probability the execution of as many of them, as the number of Federals hung, so they rode away without carrying out their threat.

There being no foes in front, Major White halted his command. “We have ridden sixty miles to-day,” he said, “and my men must have rest before I attack the city. Can I take it with my force?”

“How many men have you?” asked Lawrence.

“Two hundred and twenty.”

“That with my men will make two hundred and fifty. Yes, you can take it. There are between fifteen hundred and two thousand State Guards and guerillas in and around the city, but there is no organization, no discipline. They will not stand.”

“Then you have been there?” asked the major.

“Yes. Left the city not two hours ago. Chased out. Masqueraded as good Rebels and they found us out.”

That evening Lawrence told the major all that had happened.

“Wonderful,” exclaimed the major. “Your trip is the most daring thing I have heard during the war. The wiping out of Proctor’s gang was glorious.”

“Now tell me of yourself,” said Lawrence. “Finding you here with so few men, tells me I am not the only one taking chances.”

“I was about to leave Jefferson City with my command to join Fremont,” said the major, “when word came that the Federal prisoners in Lexington were about to be executed. Among the prisoners are Colonel White and Colonel Groves. For some reason General Price refused to parole them when he paroled the rest of the officers captured at Lexington. There were no troops that could be spared to go to their relief, excepting my command, and small as my force is, I concluded to make the attempt. We have come in a hurry, as I told you we have ridden sixty miles to-day.”

“Which speaks volumes for you,” said Lawrence. “Major, there should be an eagle on your shoulder strap.”

The next morning Major White charged into the

city meeting with but slight resistance, but he succeeding in capturing seventy prisoners, sixty stands of arms and twenty-five horses.

The Federal prisoners, some twenty of them, to their great joy were released.

Along in the afternoon the steamer *Sioux City*, came down the river, and having no suspicion that the place had been recaptured by the Federals, proceeded to tie up at the wharf, where it was immediately taken possession of by the Yanks much to the surprise of the crew.

The Federal prisoners who had been released were put on board together with a new crew, and the boat sent on down the river, and in time reached St. Louis in safety.

Thus was Lexington once more in the hands of the Federals, but not for long.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHARGE OF THE BODY GUARD

THE disloyal element in Lexington was not long in finding out the smallness of the force that had captured the city. No time was lost in sending this information to the State Guards and guerillas who had fled. They began coming back by hundreds and Major White saw he would soon be surrounded by an overwhelming force, so he concluded to evacuate the city. This he could do with good grace, as the object of his coming, the liberation of the prisoners, had been accomplished.

His little force must have been held in great dread for no attempt was made to prevent his leaving, nor was he followed.

From the time Bruno swam the river, nothing had been seen of him, and the troop began to think him lost, but Harry would shake his head and say, "He 'll show up all right."

Hardly had the troop left Lexington, when, as they were passing through a piece of woods Harry gave a peculiar whistle, and to the surprise of all,

Bruno came bounding out, overjoyed to meet his master once more.

"Bruno has not been far away any of the time," said Harry, "but he had strict orders not to come near me, until I gave permission."

"So you think the dog understood your orders?" asked one of the men rather sarcastically.

"Certainly," replied Harry. "If not, why did he stay away until I whistled for him?"

"But he followed the ferry and you did not whistle," persisted the doubter.

"Bruno knew full well he would have to get across the river or he would lose track of us," answered Harry. "Did he come to us after he got across? Not at all. He waited until he got permission. I tell you, Bruno knows more and obeys orders better than some men."

At this there was a laugh for the doubter was known as a big kicker against discipline.

Not only Lawrence, but the whole troop, was glad the dog had returned and before the day was over Bruno had shown that the confidence reposed in him was not misplaced.

Warrensburg, which lay about thirty miles south of Lexington, was to be the next stop. The route lay through as hostile a country as if it had been South Carolina instead of Missouri.

Lawrence's troop was given the honor of the ad-

vance by Major White, and rather a busy day it proved for them. Not many miles from Lexington they ran into a squad of guerillas, and after an exciting chase captured four of them.

Bruno now began to show his value. He rarely failed to give notice if any guerillas were skulking near.

Once he showed great excitement, and kept running towards a thicket some distance from the road. He would make a few bounds toward the thicket, then come back, look up at the men and then bound back, as if to say, "Danger over there."

Lawrence halted and said to Marvin, "Have half a dozen men dismount, let them advance carefully and investigate that thicket. The dog evidently scents trouble."

Hardly had Lawrence spoken when there burst from the thicket puffs of smoke, and then the report of half a dozen rifles.

"Do n't dismount. Charge," shouted Lawrence. By the time the thicket was reached the birds had flown. The guerillas had fired but the one volley then mounted their horses and dashed away.

"No use following," said Lawrence. Then he asked, "Did the curs do any damage with that volley?"

"Look at your hat," answered Marvin smiling. Lawrence took off his hat, the crown had been torn

by a ball. "A trifle high," he remarked as he placed it back on his head. "Is that all?"

"Colton's horse was wounded," spoke up one of the men.

"Let him take one of the horses we have captured," answered Lawrence.

About one o'clock the column was halted to rest the horses and give the men time to make a little coffee. The halt was made near a house, and for a wonder the owner was at home. He was a surly fellow about forty years of age, and he showed by his manner he had no use for Yankees.

There was a fine field of corn growing near the house, and to this the soldiers helped themselves liberally, giving their horses a good feed. Against this the man protested vehemently. Major White in reply to his protest said, "I will give you a voucher for the full value of the corn taken, and if you can prove your loyalty you will have no trouble in collecting it."

To this the fellow replied with a fierce oath, "Keep your voucher. I want no Yankee paper." He went into the house and they saw him no more.

The rest over, the column moved on, Marvin in advance, Lawrence having fallen back to speak to Major White.

When they had gone about half a mile there came a puff of smoke from a clump of bushes about

three hundred yards away and Marvin's horse fell. A ball had struck it squarely in the side close to Marvin's leg.

Hardly had the report of the shot died away when there came from the bushes shrieks of terror mingled with the hoarse growling of some beast.

"Charge for the bushes," shouted Marvin, trying to disengage himself from his fallen horse.

Harry Semans was already half across the field. When he reached the bushes he found Bruno with his teeth buried in the throat of a man, who was struggling to free himself and shrieking for help.

"Back, Bruno, back," commanded Harry. The dog released his hold, but stood eyeing the prostrate man.

"It's that surly fellow back where we halted," said Lawrence, looking at the man who lay groaning, the blood welling from the fearful gashes in his throat.

A hasty examination showed that although the throat was badly torn, no vital spot had been reached. A few rods away a fine horse was found hitched.

"So this is how the fellow thought to get his pay for the corn," said Lawrence. "Take a shot at us, and flee. Lieutenant, it is fortunate that he got your horse and not you, and here is a better horse than yours."

"How about the bushwhacker?" asked Marvin.

“It would serve him right if we left him here to rot.”

“No, we must take him back to his wife,” said Lawrence.

A blanket was produced, the wounded man placed in it, and carried back to his home, Lawrence going ahead to break the news to his wife.

“Your husband has been badly hurt, but I hope not fatally,” said Lawrence gently. “My soldiers are bringing him.”

She gave a low cry, clasped her hands to her breast and looked at Lawrence wildly.

“How did it happen?” she whispered.

“He shot at us and the dog caught him. I am sorry for your sake, but he came near killing one of my officers.”

By this time the man was brought in and laid on a bed. The woman dropped on her knees by his side, “Oh! Tom, Tom,” she sobbed. “I begged you not to go, but you would.”

Two little children clung to her dress, adding their cries of terror to her sobs. Lawrence looked on with saddened heart, yet this little scene was but a single drop in the great ocean of tears which was being shed by a stricken nation.

As Lawrence turned away he heard a kind voice say, “Let me look at him, madam,” and the surgeon of Major White’s troop was bending over the

stricken man. With skilful fingers he washed and dressed the wounds, and then cheerfully said to the wife, "Be of good cheer. The wounds are not necessarily fatal. With good care he may pull through." Then he gave her careful instructions and left her bandages and medicine.

She seemed amazed at the kindness shown and sobbed out her thanks. "I have been told all Yankees were monsters," she said. "That you murdered women and children and did even worse, but you have been so kind, and after Tom tried to kill some of you."

The troop rode away, saddened for a moment by the woman's sorrow. Bruno became the pride of the troop. Lawrence patted him saying, "Good old Bruno, and we wanted to leave you. But we won't again old fellow for we're riding under our own colors now."

Bruno looked up into Lawrence's face and wagged his tail as much as to say, "I know it." Afterwards even Morris looked upon the dog with increasing favor.

It was nearly night when the column rode into Warrensburg. The city was intensely Southern and was the home of the fiery West and the gallant Cockrell. The one served his State in the Confederate Congress and the other as a general. After the war they were both in the United States Senate for

years, and served the whole country as faithfully as they had served the Confederacy.

No waving flags greeted the column of Major White as they rode through the city, there were no joyous shouts of greeting, instead the streets were full of men who gazed on them malevolently, and cursed as they gazed. From every house angry eyes glared at them, and fair women spat at them to show their contempt.

"Truly a royal welcome," said Lawrence, smiling.

"It is a welcome we will do well to heed," replied Major White. "We must pitch our camp where it can be easily defended, and where it will not be easy for bushwhackers to slip up and pick us off."

Such a place was found and the men were cautioned to be unusually vigilant.

Shortly after dark an attack was made on the camp. It was very feeble and easily repulsed without loss. All through the night skulking bushwhackers kept firing into camp, and the men got little rest.

The next morning Major White sent out and gathered the principal men of the city and made them a speech, short and to the point. "If you have enough men to offer me honorable battle," he said, "come on and we will try conclusions, and fight it out like soldiers; but I do not intend to allow my

men to be fired on by a lot of skulking, cowardly bushwhackers. I shall stay here two days, and if another shot is fired into my camp I shall lay the city in ashes. That is all."

It was enough. Major White stayed the two days, but not another shot was fired. It was a relieved lot of citizens that saw the command ride away.

"Now for Warsaw and Fremont," exclaimed Major White, and the slogan ran along the line amid the wildest enthusiasm.

Their way was once more through a hostile country, but Fremont had passed over it, and they had little trouble with guerillas. They found the inhabitants very bitter over the actions of General Jim Lane of Kansas. When Price moved up to capture Lexington, Lane made a dash in his rear from Fort Scott, and advanced into Missouri as far as Osceola, which place Price had made a depot for supplies. Lane not only burned the supplies but the whole town, and on his retreat back, his men freely plundered houses, returning to Fort Scott loaded with spoils.

There is no doubt that the acts of Lane, Montgomery, Jennison and other Kansas leaders made the war in Missouri more bitter than it would have been otherwise.

But Kansas had many an old score to pay off

against Missouri. For years the people of that Territory had been plundered, robbed, and in many cases murdered by the border ruffians who had come over from Missouri, and now that they had the opportunity they were not slow in repaying the debt. The term "Kansas Jayhawkers" became as much of a terror to Missourians as "Border Ruffians" had been to the residents of Kansas.

The advance of Fremont had been slow, and when Major White reached Warsaw he found that the army had advanced but little beyond.

At Warsaw Lawrence found a number of scouts who had been with him when he was with Lyon, and every one of them was eager to go into his company. He had no trouble in bringing his number up to fifty, and these men were of the best material. Among them was one named Dan Sherman, a scout whom Lawrence prized very highly, and who became to him what Dick Darling was to Fred Shackelford in the "The Young Kentuckians Series."

Lawrence continued with Major White, who was given the advance with orders to reconnoitre towards Springfield and ascertain whether Price intended to give battle there.

Fremont firmly believed Price had concentrated his army and would make a stand at Springfield. In fact from the beginning of the campaign Fremont

had been haunted with the fear that Price might attack him, yet during the whole campaign he never got within fifty miles of Price.

At Warsaw Morris had gone off on one of his lone scouts. He returned just as Major White's command was to start for Springfield. He reported that he had been near Springfield and that Price's army was not there, but at least fifty miles beyond. Springfield was occupied by about five hundred cavalry. It was also said that there was an infantry force of about one thousand near by, but this he could not verify.

The news was taken to Fremont, who ordered Major White to move on the place as rapidly as possible, that he would reinforce him with his body guard, and if Major Zagonyi, commander of the guard thought it feasible they should take possession of the city.

When the command was several miles from the city, Major White halted to await the coming of the body guard.

Morris signified his intention of returning to the city and learning the exact situation. For fear he might meet someone who knew him, he assumed his old disguise.

Dan Sherman looked at him in surprise, for he had not seen him in disguise before. "Look here, Morris," he said. "I know you now. You were

with us when we made that scout to Jefferson City. I've laughed a hundred times over the way you fooled Colonel Bell. I have often wondered what became of you. Let me go with you."

Morris shook his head. "Can't this time, Dan," he said. "There is no one I had rather take with me than you if I took any one, but some other time," and he rode away.

Sherman looked puzzled. "Captain," he said to Lawrence, when Morris was out of sight, "I do n't understand. Why did Morris disguise himself on that scout to Jefferson City, and now only disguises himself when in fear of meeting the enemy."

"Things have changed," replied Lawrence. "Then he was disguised when he was Union, and his natural self when a Reb; now he is his natural self when a Union, and disguised when a Reb. But, Dan, seek to know no more. Never question him as to his past. If you do we might lose a valuable man."

Dan promised; but he was naturally curious to know who Morris was, and whether that was his right name or not.

When Morris left Lawrence it was with the full determination of entering Springfield and finding out the exact state of affairs. He knew the undertaking was a dangerous one, but that only added to the zest of it.

Instead of taking the direct road to Springfield, Morris made a circuit around, and entered the city from the rear. He had little trouble in getting in, and soon had the information he desired.

While he was debating the best way to return, a troop of Confederate cavalry came riding along and Morris with a start hastily turned away. Riding with the troop was Dickey Holbrook, and Morris knew that Dickey had seen him in the disguise he wore. He now knew that the quicker he got out of Springfield the better. Moreover the approach of a force of Yankees was now known, and frantic messages were being sent to all nearby troops to hurry to the city to help defend it. Morris seized upon this fact to get away without being suspected. He volunteered to go and find out if possible the number of Yankees threatening the city. This met with approval and he was given a pass by the commanding officer. He galloped away well pleased with his mission, for the pass would protect him from all interference.

More than once he was halted and his name and business demanded, but the pass made all clear sailing, and soon he was told that only an advance picket post was in his front.

"Any Yanks around?" Morris asked of the sergeant in command of the post, as he rode up.

"Do n't know," drawled the sergeant. "We'uns

heard thar was a few around about Baker's, three or four miles from here."

"Is it not your business to find out?" asked Morris in a tone of authority. "What are you here for?"

"To guard this heah road," answered the sergeant. "I was told to stay heah, and heah I stay, unless the Yanks drive me away."

"Excuse me, Sergeant," said Morris. "I see you are not to leave your post to do scout duty. Well, if there are any Yankees in front, it's up to me to find out how many there are. Say, Sergeant, if I come back in a hurry see that your men do n't fire on me."

The sergeant shook his head as Morris rode away. "Do n't know what to think of him," he muttered, "but I reckon it's all right."

While talking with the sergeant Morris had carefully noted the number of men at the post, and also the best way to take it by surprise.

Morris had not ridden more than three miles farther when he came on the advance guard of the Federals, who proved to be a part of Fremont's body guard. The guard had come up under the command of Major Zagonyi, and he had assumed command of the whole force.

The guards at first took Morris for a guerilla, and thought they had taken a prisoner. They would

hardly believe him when he said he was a scout for Major White and demanded to be conducted to him.

Morris could not hide his admiration for the appearance of the body guard. Mounted on their splendid horses, their gaudy uniforms showed resplendent in the sun. They were soon to show the world they could fight, and were not merely dress parade soldiers.

Both Zagonyi and White listened closely while Morris made his report.

"There are," he said, "from five to seven hundred cavalry in Springfield and at least one thousand infantry within supporting distance. But these troops are not seasoned veterans, neither are they under good discipline, and the different commands are somewhat scattered. I believe with a sudden dash the city could be captured."

Zagonyi had one hundred and fifty men; White, including Lawrence's command, one hundred and eighty, making a force of three hundred and thirty to attack at least six times their number, but Zagonyi did not hesitate.

After hearing Morris's report he wrote a despatch to Fremont in which he said, "There are 1800 or 1900 men in Springfield. I move forward and do what I can."

Brave words, but the major made them good.

Morris now told of the advance picket post, and

that if the whole post was captured, the enemy could be completely surprised. A squad under his guidance undertook to do this, but succeeded in capturing only five of the six, the one escaping carrying the news of the advance back to Springfield.

All hope of surprising the enemy now being gone, Major Zagonyi concluded to make a circuit around the city and attack from the rear.

Morris again guided the column, taking the same route he had taken when he entered the city.

When about two miles from Springfield they suddenly came upon the enemy drawn up in line of battle. Not a moment did the body guard hesitate; with a cry of "Fremont and the Union" they swept forward as invincible as an avalanche. Through the hundreds before them they rode, trampling them down, sabring, shooting.

The infantry fled to a wood, where they were attacked and halted by Major White's command. The body guard accompanied by Lawrence's company followed the fleeing cavalry into Springfield and through the streets, riding down everything before them. The enemy would rally only to be scattered like chaff before the wind.

Back and forth through the streets they rode until all armed resistance ceased. Springfield was once more in the hands of the Federals, won against overwhelming odds, by one of the most gallant

charges made during the war — the one bright spot in Fremont's career in Missouri. In the newspapers the charge was compared to the charge of the Light Brigade at the battle of Balaklava. It was indeed a wild charge and the body guard deserved all the praise they received. No one now thought of the gaudy uniform they wore, for each uniform clothed the body of a hero, and was made sacred, not by tinsel and gold, but by the blood of a patriot. Of the gallant men who charged fifty had fallen, dead and wounded.

The starry flag was raised over the court house, and seventy Federal prisoners released. Springfield, for which Lyon had fought and died, was once more in the hands of the Federals.

After the battle, when Lawrence gathered his little company together he found ten of them had fallen, and among them was his gallant lieutenant, Mark Marvin, who was mortally wounded.

Choking back his grief, Lawrence bent over the brave fellow. "Mark, Mark," he whispered, "What can I do for you? Oh! My God! I did not think of this. I cannot give you up."

Marvin opened his eyes and smiled. "It's all right, Captain," he whispered. Then seeing the tears glistening in Lawrence's eyes he gasped, "Do n't, Captain, do n't. Thousands must die for the old flag, and why not I? But there is a little

girl back in St. Joe to whom this will be sad news. Will you not tell her I fell doing my duty? And — and tell her I died thinking of her.”

Lawrence promised, and afterwards that promise was faithfully fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIV

FREMONT IS REMOVED

FREMONT moved forward with his army, occupied Springfield, and made it his headquarters. He fully expected that Price would give him battle at or near Springfield, but in this he was disappointed. Price was in no condition to attack, in fact the bulk of his army was fifty miles away.

There are no records of Price and Fremont meeting; yet in some way they must have communicated, for about this time there appeared a joint proclamation signed by both. By the terms of this proclamation no person was to be arrested for his political opinions, and all such that had been arrested were to be released. In return Union men were not to be molested.

It was almost the same old agreement that Price had made with General Harney. Under it Price's soldiers could return home for the winter and remain practically unmolested. As for the guerrilla bands which infested the State, they owed no allegiance to General Price, and he had no more control

over them than the man in the moon. It left the Union men completely at their mercy.

It is strange that Fremont and Price would enter into any such agreement without consulting their respective Governments. There was some excuse for Price acting as he did. He had been waging a warfare almost independent of the Confederate Government. His command had consisted of State, not Confederate troops. Although he had accomplished more than any other general of the South, he was mistrusted and disliked by Jefferson Davis and his advisers.

Time and again had Price been balked in his movements by General Ben McCulloch, who had Davis's ear. If Price had been heartily supported by McCulloch and Davis, the situation in Missouri would have been dark indeed for the Union cause.

About that time a serious disagreement arose between McCulloch and Price. Under the pretext that Fremont would use the products of the country to support his army; against the protests of Price, McCulloch sent his Texas cavalry into southwest Missouri, and the country was lighted up with burning mills and stacks of grain and forage. Thus McCulloch did what would have been denounced as an act of savage vandalism if done by any Federal general.

With the exception of Wilson Creek, so far Price

had fought all his battles without the aid of McCulloch and with State troops alone.

General Fremont, on his part, had a serious grievance against President Lincoln and felt he had not been properly supported by the authorities at Washington. Thus it was not strange that Price and Fremont felt like running the war to suit themselves. But these generals never had an opportunity to carry out their agreement.

Hardly had Fremont established his headquarters at Springfield when like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, came an order from Washington for him to turn over the command of the army to General David Hunter. Fremont's partisans, and they were legion, were not only amazed, but terribly wrought up over the order.

The Union men of Missouri had become divided into two factions: the Radicals, nicknamed the Charcoals; and the Conservatives. The feeling between these two factions became almost as bitter as the feeling between Union and Confederate.

The Charcoals were strong supporters of Fremont, and to this faction belonged most of the Union-loving Germans. The Germans hated slavery fully as much as the old line abolitionists. Fremont and Sigel were their idols. Fremont was also in high favor with the abolitionists of the entire North. His proclamation issued nearly a year and a

half before Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, that all slaves of disloyal persons should be free, had struck a popular chord throughout the entire North, and President Lincoln was severely condemned for nullifying Fremont's act.

The first months of the war had been very disastrous to the Union forces, and for these disasters many held Lincoln responsible. There were mutterings over the way the war was being conducted, and many went so far as to advocate the overthrow of the National Government, and the appointing of a military dictator. In the East these malcontents looked to General George B. McClellan as the Cromwell to guide the nation in its extremity, while in the West Fremont was looked upon as the coming saviour of the nation.

Now that the name of Lincoln is honored and revered throughout the world, one can hardly imagine the fault found with him and the abuse heaped upon him during the first years of the war.

As to the removal of Fremont, the student of history, can now see that it was a military necessity. Not only was his military record a failure, but his administration was one of reckless extravagance. Many of his subordinates were what we now call grafters.

To illustrate: Fremont at the commencement of the war was sent to Europe to buy arms. He pur-

chased a large consignment of guns, known as the Belgian rifle. These guns proved almost absolutely useless, but the Government was charged a big round price for them.

One of Fremont's agents, a Mr. Selover, who helped make the purchase, boasted that he cleared thirty thousand dollars in the transaction. But Mr. Selover was not the only one who made money out of the extremity of the country. Graft is no new thing.

When the orders for the removal of Fremont came, many of his hot-headed admirers urged him to defy the Government, declare himself the Commander of the Department of the West, and run things to suit himself. To the honor of Fremont he refused, and issuing a touching and patriotic farewell to the army, departed for St. Louis with his now famous body guard as an escort. Here the body guard, by the order of General McClellan, was mustered out of service. Thus this gallant body of men who carved their names among the nation's heroes by that memorable charge at Springfield, was lost to the Government, and we hear of them no more.

With the appointment of General Hunter to the command of the army there came to him a personal letter from President Lincoln on the situation in Missouri, and while the letter left much to the dis-

cretion of Hunter, in it Lincoln strongly advised him to relinquish Springfield, and the whole of southwest Missouri, and to fall back, forming a line south of the Missouri River.

It is plain from reading this letter that the President had no conception of the real situation in Missouri. He seemed to take for granted that Price's army had disintegrated, and that the Union men and guerillas would soon get tired of killing each other and quit of their own accord.

It was grievous advice, a gigantic mistake on the part of Lincoln, advice that General Lyon would never have taken, for he would have shown the President the lamentable results that would follow. But the advice was so strong it almost took the form of an order, and General Hunter proceeded to carry it out to the letter.

Orders were given for Springfield to be evacuated, and without striking a blow at Price, leaving Lexington unavenged, the army that had advanced with such high hopes, commenced their weary march back to the Missouri River. There was nothing to make them go, no enemy in sight; they were fleeing when there were none to pursue.

Twice had the army marched over that one hundred and fifty miles of rough roads; twice had Springfield been taken, now to be given up. Was it any wonder that the soldiers turned their faces

northward with despairing hearts? Was it any wonder there were curses both loud and deep?

Well was it that the great mass of soldiers did not know that the retreat was by direct advice of Lincoln. Well was it that Fremont had gone, for had he been present and it became known he was against the retrograde movement, the soldiers would have compelled him to resume command.

To the Union men of Southwest Missouri this backward step came as a cruel blow. It was not only disheartening, but appalling. When the army advanced, hundreds who had fled for their lives had returned to their homes. Now they were again to be deserted and left a prey to the blood-thirsty guerillas. After having suffered much, they were to suffer more.

Not only this, but the movement opened a way for Price clear to the Missouri River. The road to Lexington was again clear, and the vast supplies of North Missouri were again in his reach. The guerilla bands once more took courage and sprang up all over the State, like mushrooms in the night. Little did Lincoln think when he gave that advice, the direful consequences that would follow, and in all probability he never did fully know, for more tremendous problems were pressing upon him.*

*John McElroy in his book, "The Struggle for Missouri," tries to excuse Lincoln by saying that in all probability the

No one was more surprised at the retreat of the Federal army than General Price. At first he could hardly believe it, thinking it a ruse to draw him out in battle. When once assured it was a fact, he made preparations to advance, and sent word to McCulloch to join him. Again McCulloch failed him. Nothing daunted, Price again started north with his faithful Missourians. He advanced with his main army as far as Osceola, and sent the brigades of Rains and Steen as far north as Lexington to hold the river, and make a safe passage for recruits and supplies from the northern part of the State.

To encourage recruiting he issued a grandiloquent proclamation to the people of Northern and Central Missouri, calling for fifty thousand recruits. Now that the fierce excitement and passions of those days are no more, one can hardly read the proclamation without a smile. It sounds more like the effusion of some sophomore than like a staid old general.

“I must have fifty thousand men,” was the burden of his cry. He implored them to leave all and

letter was dictated by McClellan, yet praises Lincoln for the generalship it displayed. The generalship would have been all right if conditions had been as Lincoln supposed. If McClellan dictated the letter why not give him credit for the generalship? When the great charge at Gettysburg failed, and some were trying to lay the blame on Longstreet, General Lee in the nobleness of his heart said, “I alone am to blame.” Such would have been the answer of the great Lincoln if asked, as to the results of that letter.

to come. What if they did lose their property? The Union men of Missouri owned \$200,000,000 worth of property, and if needed every dollar of it would be taken to reimburse them when Missouri was free.

Thus did General Price promise universal confiscation of all property of Union men in the State. Happily for his friends the Federal Government did not enforce the same doctrines.

After this munificent promise the General cried: "In the name of God and the attributes of manhood let me appeal to you by considerations infinitely higher than money! Are we a generation of drooling, snivelling, degraded slaves?"

The proclamation closed with: "Do I hear your shouts? Is that your war cry which echoes through the land? Are you coming? Fifty thousand men! Missouri shall move to victory with the tread of a giant! Come on, my brave boys, 50,000 heroic, gallant, unconquerable, Southern men! We await your coming!"

But General Price waited in vain to hear the shouts of the fifty thousand. They did not come. But the promise of confiscation did encourage the guerilla bands to renewed activity, and make them more free, if that were possible, with Union men's property. In some places these guerillas gathered in such numbers as to become formidable armies.

From all over the State there went up a wail of despair and anger from the Union men. In the army there was discontent and discouragement. Especially were the friends of Fremont active in denouncing the Government and General Hunter, claiming Hunter had intrigued in getting Fremont's place. They claimed that if Fremont had been kept in command there would have been no backward movement, that Fremont had been removed when he was about to give battle, and thus had not been given a fair chance.

So desperate became the situation, and so great the dissatisfaction that the authorities at Washington began to wake up and realize that a great mistake had been made, and General Hunter was removed after he had been in command hardly more than two weeks. Thus he had to suffer for following the advice of the President. But as some compensation, a new department was created called, "The Department of Kansas" and he was placed in command.

To the disappointment of Sigel's friends he was not given the place vacated by Hunter, but there came to St. Louis General Henry W. Halleck as commander of the entire Western Department, and with him there came a change, for a new regime began.

CHAPTER XV

HOPŌEITHLEYOHOLA

THIS is the story of Hopŏeithleyohola, the brave Cherokee chief — a story of how the war blighted the Indian Territory. It is a part of the great war which is but little known, and of which history has little to say, yet it is one of the saddest episodes of that great struggle.

At the commencement of the war it was estimated that the Indian Territory contained about one hundred thousand inhabitants. These Indians consisted chiefly of the tribes which had been forced to move out of the Southern States, notably the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks and Chickasaws. These tribes had made remarkable progress in civilization, and were known as the civilized tribes. They had churches, school houses, tilled large farms, and had immense herds of cattle, horses, sheep and swine. They were prosperous, contented, happy and at peace among themselves. It is a curious fact that at the commencement of the war, these Indians owned nearly ten thousand negro slaves.

When the war began, these Indians petitioned to

be left in peace. "We have done nothing to bring on the war," they truthfully said. "We are friends to both sides. All we wish is to remain in peace."

It is an everlasting disgrace that this prayer was not granted. They were wards of the nation, not citizens. But the Confederate Government viewed the Territory as a part of its domain, and treated it as such. Hundreds of these Indians were half-breeds, and the Confederacy thought they would make good soldiers.

The Indian agents who had all been appointed by Pierce or Buchanan, were intensely Southern. These agents were commissioned colonels, and directed to raise regiments among the Indians for the Confederate service.

At the head of these agents was Superintendent Albert Pike, a New England Yankee, but who rivalled the most rabid fire-eater in his hatred of the Union. Pike was made a Brigadier General and was to command the whole force of Indians when raised. It is claimed by some that Pike was a born poet. Be this as it may, his career showed he was no soldier. It is certain that the Confederacy reaped little reward for all the misery it brought upon its Indian adherents.

The agents, as new-made colonels, commenced enlisting the Indians, but Hopoeithleyohola, an aged Cherokee chief rebelled. "Why," he asked, "should

I and my people fight against the Great Father at Washington?"

Hopoeithleyohola, at this time was nearly a hundred years old. If all the details of his long life could be written they would be more interesting than any dime novel of Indian life. He was a boy at the time of the Revolutionary War. When a young man he fought for the Spaniards against the English in Florida. During the War of 1812-1815 of the United States against England, he fought valiantly for the English, for he felt he was fighting for the preservation of the land of his forefathers. He was one of the bravest of the chieftains that opposed General Jackson in his campaign against the Southern Indians in 1813-1814 and fought until all hope was gone.

When the inevitable came, and the Southern tribes were compelled to give up their hunting grounds and be transported across the Mississippi to the wilds of the Indian Territory, with a heavy heart he took his last look at the hunting grounds of his ancestors and went with his people to their far western home.

Here he taught his tribe the arts of peace, and they were among the most contented, happy and prosperous of the Indians of the Territory.

"Why should I in my old age," he asked, "dig up the tomahawk and make war against the Great

Father? The war is none of my making. Let me remain in peace, and the white men fight it out among themselves, but if I have to fight it will be for the Great Father."

War was at once declared against Hopoeithleyohola. The grim, old chieftain accepted the issue, and gathered his faithful followers for the unequal contest.

Not only were there let loose on him, the hundreds of Indians and half-breeds which had been enlisted for the Confederate service, but between one and two thousand of Texas and Arkansas troops as well.

In the first encounter Hopoeithleyohola was successful in driving the invaders back. Before they could gather in stronger force and renew the conflict there came Fremont's advance and capture of Springfield.

The Confederates became alarmed, and withdrew their troops from the Indian Territory to help resist Fremont.

Now comes the saddest sequel to that unfortunate advice given to General Hunter by President Lincoln. When it became known that the Federal army had fallen back, and that Price was no longer in danger of being attacked, the Confederates once more renewed their efforts to crush the loyal Indians. An overwhelming force was hurled against

them. After an obstinate battle Hopoeithleyohola was defeated, and his forces hopelessly crushed.

Hopoeithleyohola with the remnant of his followers fled to Kansas. The way was long, the country barren, the weather bitterly cold and on their heels followed the remorseless and merciless pursuers. Before Kansas was reached the bones of a thousand men, women, and children lay whitening on the bleak plains.

Hopoeithleyohola reached Fort Scott in safety, but with his heart broken and bowed beneath his weight of years. In a few days he passed away and joined his followers who had gone before, to the happy hunting grounds of the future.

The Federal Government did this much for him. It gave him a military funeral worthy of his rank.

The death of Hopoeithleyohola and the defeat of his followers did not end the sufferings of the Indians in the Territory. For four years they suffered all the horrors of war, and when it was over the country was a waste. Schools, churches and houses were gone; their fields were devastated; their flocks and herds had been driven away; their horses and cattle had either been stolen or taken to supply the Confederate armies.

So abject was the poverty of the Indians at the close of the war that they had to be fed by the Government to keep them from starving. It is esti-

mated that of the one hundred thousand Indians who inhabited the Territory at the beginning of the war, at least twenty-five thousand perished either in battle or from exposure and starvation before the conflict was over.

CHAPTER XVI

A FAITHLESS KNIGHT-ERRANT

THE retreat of the Federal army from Springfield was a bitter disappointment for Lawrence and his scouts. As for Charles Morris, he was wild with rage. "I've a mind to throw up the whole thing," he growled. "Fremont was bad, but Hunter is worse."

"Do n't blame Hunter too much," said Lawrence. "I am told he acted on the advice of the President."

"Advice! Advice of the President!" sneered Morris. "What does Abe Lincoln know of the situation here in Missouri? He a thousand miles away."

"It was mighty poor advice, I admit," sighed Lawrence. "The consequences have been deplorable."

"Do you think that Lyon would have followed that advice?" asked Morris. "No, he would have told the President his advice was no good and gone on and whipped Price out of his boots. Just look at the army now, discouraged, worn out with marching, almost ready to mutiny. Why, if Fremont

would but raise his standard, nine out of ten soldiers would rally around it in defiance of Hunter and the President. I tell you things have to change and that mighty quick, or Price will have the State."

But something now happened that made them forget the situation in Missouri. "Have you seen this?" shouted Dan Sherman, coming up and shaking a St. Louis paper before their eyes. "It's outrageous!"

"What is it?" asked Lawrence surprised.

"Read it," said Sherman pointing to an article in the paper.

It was the report of Major Zagonyi of the celebrated charge of the body guard on Springfield, and to Lawrence's astonishment, it was stated that his troop had taken no part in the charge, in fact had deserted the body guard, and left them to make the charge alone.

His face grew stern as he read. "For myself," he said, "I care little, but for the sake of the brave Marvin and others of the troop who gave their lives, justice must be done, and I shall go to St. Louis and see that it is."

As soon as he could make preparations to go, Lawrence left for St. Louis, leaving the troop in command of Dan Sherman, knowing that all would be well.

At St. Louis Lawrence found all excitement. The

Federals were quarrelling fiercely among themselves. The Germans were angry because Hunter instead of Sigel had been given command of the army. The partisans of Fremont were raging because of his removal, claiming he was about to do great things.

The secessionists were correspondingly jubilant. Price was again sweeping north with his army, and they believed the liberation of the State from the hated Yankees was at hand.

Lawrence found that the body guard with Zagonyi had been mustered out of service, but he found the major, who acknowledged his error in his report, but did not seem inclined to make amends. Lawrence asked for a Court of Inquiry. It was granted, and the court found that his objections to the report of Zagonyi were well taken, but for some reason the report was never made public, and in the rush of events that happened afterwards, the incident was forgotten.

Lawrence found that his uncle like the other secessionists of St. Louis was highly elated over the turn affairs had taken. Although he was warmly welcomed he could see his uniform was a thing to be hated and despised.

“I tell you, Lawrence,” said his uncle, “the South is bound to win. The North has been beaten both here and in the East. There is not a ghost of a show for you. Better resign and get out of the

army while you can with some credit. We will try and forget your going wrong and look to you, in the years to come, to be a good and loyal citizen of the Southern Confederacy."

Lawrence smiled. "I admit, uncle," he said, "that we have made a mighty poor showing so far, but the war has hardly begun. We were all mistaken, both North and South, in thinking that the war would be a short one. It will be both long and bloody; but in the end the old flag will be triumphant and the Union restored."

"Bosh!" said his uncle as he turned away disgusted.

Lawrence could not leave St. Louis without calling on his little friend Lola Laselle. She was delighted to see him and gave him a warm greeting. "I have heard of that charge at Springfield," she exclaimed, "and was n't it grand, grand! Lawrence, I am proud of you."

Lawrence looked at her with admiration. She was now fourteen and rapidly budding into womanhood. Her dark eyes and hair showed her French extraction. Her complexion was clear and she had a bright, intelligent face, a face one loved to look at, for it showed a sunny disposition and a kind heart.

"I declare, Lola, you are getting to be almost a woman," exclaimed Lawrence, "and you're growing lovelier every day. Soon you will be a young

lady and have hosts of admirers and poor I will be forgotten!"

"Flatterer, you do n't believe a word you say," laughed Lola. "But I shall never forget you, Lawrence. You are my knight-errant you know, defending the flag that I love."

"And a true knight may I be! But, Lola, tell me the news. How is your brother Leon?"

"Leon's regiment is with Grant at Cairo now. He writes me he has been promoted to sergeant, and that before he comes home he expects to have a commission."

"He will win one before the war is over, never fear. But, how are times here?"

"Bad as they can be. The Unionists and Secessionists are getting to hate each other worse every day, and the women are worse than the men. It is awful the way the girls insult the soldiers. I do n't see how they stand it."

"And Miss Dorothy Hamilton?"

Lola's brow clouded. "I do n't see why you should ask about her," she pouted. "She is the worst of the lot. I heard that she said she wanted to live to see both you and Guilford Craig hanged."

"Blood-thirsty Dorothy, I would like to oblige her, but I do n't see how I can," laughed Lawrence. "The last time I saw her I passed her on the sidewalk, and she tilted her nose so high I thought it

would never come down. How does she pass you now?"

Lola tossed her head. "Oh! it's tit for tat," she exclaimed. "I tilt my nose just as high as she tilts hers when I pass her."

"Poor noses," said Lawrence. "I am afraid they will get out of shape, and such pretty noses too."

"Keep your compliments for Dorothy's nose. You know mine turns up a little," said Lola a little sharply.

"Now, Lola, do n't slander your nose, it's a pretty one and my only fear is that some day it may turn up at me."

"It never will," said Lola solemnly, and as she said it there came a look in her eyes that set Lawrence's heart throbbing, and at that moment he thought her the only girl in the world worth looking at.

"I do n't see how Dorothy can be so wicked," Lola continued. "I do n't wish any one hung, not even Benton Shelley, and he tried to kill you."

"That was in battle Lola, and I bear him no ill will for that, but I do for some other things he has done. For instance he seems to take pleasure in trying to get Guilford hung."

"Poor Guilford," sighed Lola. "My! Did n't that create an excitement among the Secessionists

when they found he had been playing them false. Poor Mr. Craig. They say he looks ten years older. You know he disinherited Guilford, and will not allow his name to be mentioned. I wonder what has become of him."

Lawrence did not answer.

"I believe you know all about Guilford," cried the girl. "Please tell me. Everyone is wondering what has become of him."

"I can tell you this," answered Lawrence. "When Guilford left it was with the intention of never returning, and he so wrote his father. He told me that from the day he left Guilford Craig was dead, that he would change his name, and become lost to everyone who knew him. It seems that he has carried out his intentions. But, Lola, let's talk of other things, it makes me sad to think of how this war is dividing father from son, brother from brother."

Then they talked of other things, but it was not the merry talk of youth, for the black cloud of war hung over the land and on every heart, young and old, there rested a burden of fear.

When Lawrence bade the girl farewell, he took with him a promise that she would write to him. "Your letters will cheer me, and be a ray of sunshine however dark the clouds may lower," he said.

Lola watched his retreating form until it disap-

peared, then she gave a deep sigh and entered the house.

Fate seemed to decide that Lawrence all too soon was to forget that he was the chosen knight of Lola, and another was to come between.

A cold rain was falling which froze as it fell, and made the street very slippery. Just as Lawrence was to cross a street, a run-away horse came dashing around the corner. A girl was crossing the street, seeing the horse she turned, but her foot slipped and she fell directly in the path of the run-away.

A cry of horror arose from those who saw, but Lawrence sprang forward and snatched the girl, almost from beneath the hoofs of the horse. The girl was not only terribly frightened, but stunned by the fall, and as Lawrence raised her he saw she was Dorothy Hamilton.

Calling a cab he placed Dorothy in it, and bade the cabman drive with all speed to her father's house. For a few moments Dorothy lay in Lawrence's arms as one dead. Her eyes were closed, her golden hair lay in masses around her face and shoulders, and as Lawrence looked, he thought he had never seen so fair a vision.

"My God!" he groaned. "What if she be dead!" For the moment all thoughts of Lola were driven from his mind. Lola, the true hearted Lola who loved the flag for which he fought, was for-



“You saved me,” she repeated, “and in that uniform”

gotten, and he only thought of the fair being who lay in his arms, the girl who despised him and loathed the uniform he wore.

But Dorothy was not dead. She sighed and then opened her eyes. "Where am I?" she asked faintly.

"Here all safe," answered Lawrence. "You had a fall and I am taking you home."

Dorothy shivered. "I remember," she gasped. "That terrible horse. It was right on me."

"You slipped and fell," said Lawrence, "but I was near enough to snatch you away before the horse's hoofs struck you. I'm afraid I tore your dress sadly in so doing."

Dorothy glanced down at her ruined garment. "It does not matter," she said. Then she sat up and stared at Lawrence with wide open eyes. "Lawrence Middleton, it's you — you who saved me," she cried.

"Yes, Dorothy, and I thank God I was near enough to do so."

Instead of thanking him, she shrank from him. "You saved me," she repeated, "and in that uniform."

"How else could I save you? I did not have time to take it off," replied Lawrence, somewhat amused.

"I suppose I ought to thank you for saving my

life, but I do n't. I had rather have died than have that uniform touch me. I hate it, and I hate you, Lawrence Middleton. I tell you I hate you!" and the hot tears came into her eyes.

"Why?" asked Lawrence contritely.

"Because you are a traitor to the South. Lawrence Middleton, stop the cab and let me get out. I will not be seen riding with a Yankee officer."

"With your torn dress?" asked Lawrence.

"Yes, with my torn dress." She started to rise, but turned pale and sank back with a moan. "I am afraid I have sprained my ankle," she gasped.

Lawrence's face showed his pity. "Dorothy, be sensible," he said. "You do not know how sorry I am for you and I do not hate you. I never can hate you. Remember what good friends we used to be."

"That was before you turned traitor. Oh! how disappointed I was in you."

"I cannot help being what I am, true to the flag," said Lawrence, "and you cannot help being what you are a true loyal girl to the South; and I think none the less of you for it."

"That is because you know I am right," cried Dorothy. "I tell you I hate you. Let me out." Once more she tried to rise and once more sank back with a moan.

"To see you suffer is harder to bear than your

hatred, Dorothy. But you are almost home. You will soon be rid of my hateful presence."

Just then they passed a fine mansion, on the steps of which stood two fashionable young ladies. They stared at Dorothy and then fairly shrieked, "If there is n't Dorothy Hamilton riding with a Yankee officer. Shameful! Shameful!"

Dorothy heard and her cheeks flamed, but before she could say anything the cab drew up at her father's door.

"Here we are," said Lawrence and he sprang out and turned to assist her, but she waved him imperiously aside and rose to get out by herself. But no sooner did she bear her weight on her injured ankle than she gave a sharp cry and would have fallen had Lawrence not caught her in his arms.

Up the steps he bore her, her head resting on his shoulder. He could feel the beating of her heart against his; her soft hair caressed his cheek, and one golden lock fell across his lips, and — must we confess? — he gently kissed it.

As for Dorothy, for a moment she forgot she was in the arms of a Yankee officer. Those strong young arms held her so gently, yet so securely, and now there was no weight on her ankle she sighed with relief, and rested her head on Lawrence's shoulder as gently as if it had been her mother's bosom.

The entrance of Lawrence into the Hamilton household caused consternation. "Miss Dorothy has had a fall and sprained her ankle. Better call a physician right away for I am afraid it is serious." Thus saying he deposited his lovely burden on the sofa and was gone before any one had time to thank him.

That night as Lawrence lay on his bed, two faces came before his mental vision. One was the lovely face of Lola, her dark eyes shining with happiness, her heart full of sympathy. The other, the beautiful face of Dorothy Hamilton, Dorothy, the Yankee-hating Southern girl.

Lawrence tried to put away the face of the Southern girl and think only of Lola, who loved the flag he loved, who honored the uniform he wore, but the thought of the head that had rested on his shoulder, that tress of golden hair his lips had kissed would come again and again.

At last he muttered, "See here, Lawrence Middleton, you are a fool. Not yet eighteen years of age, with no fortune but your sword, and thinking of two school girls. Better go to sleep."

Like a sensible boy he took his own advice, turned over and went to sleep, not to dream of girls, but of the rush and roar of battle, and Lyon was by his side.

CHAPTER XVII

BRUNO WINS A MEDAL

WHEN Lawrence returned from St. Louis he found his troop, which he had christened the Lyon Scouts, in fine spirits and eager for active service. Dan Sherman had been faithfully drilling them, not only in the manœuvres, but in target and sword practice.

“What I want,” he said, “is not a troop for show, but men who can ride, shoot, and know how to handle the sabre.”

Lawrence heartily commended him on the improvement he had made in the troop and expressed the opinion that he would not be afraid to meet an equal number of any command that the enemy might bring against him.

While Lawrence found the condition of the Scouts so satisfactory he was anything but pleased with the condition in which he found the army. The dissatisfaction over the retreat had increased, instead of dying out, and Fremont's friends were busy in fanning the flames.

From all over the State there came fierce denun-

ciations of the Federal Government. The Union men of the State who had done so much and suffered so much for the flag they loved, had it was claimed, been deserted and left to their fate.

In the meantime Price was busy recruiting his army, and drawing immense supplies from the northern portion of the State to sustain it. Guerilla bands swarmed everywhere to plunder and to kill.

So great was the cry of general disapproval that went to Washington that the authorities had to take notice. The President soon realized that a mistake had been made and hastened to rectify it. Hunter was transferred to the new Department of Kansas, and the friends of Fremont had the satisfaction of knowing that Hunter had held the position of commander of the army hardly more than two weeks. But, as has been said before, Fremont was not reinstated.

It was during these changes that Lawrence came back from St. Louis. He had been back but a couple of days when a fugitive came into camp, saying that the day before his house had been attacked by some forty or fifty guerillas. He saw them coming and managed to escape to the woods, but as he fled he saw the flames and smoke from his burning buildings.

With tears running down his face he exclaimed,

“ God only knows what has become of my poor wife and children! ”

Lawrence asked if he might take his Scouts and go in pursuit of the band and permission was readily granted. Upon the earnest entreaty of the man an army wagon was sent along to bring back the women and children if they could be found, for he said it would be impossible for them to live in the neighborhood any longer.

A detachment of cavalry went along to guard the wagon back, if the family could be found.

Just as they were ready to start, Lawrence noticed that Bruno was with them. “ Here,” he called to Harry Semans, “ you had better tell Bruno not to come. He may be in the way.”

Harry, young as he was, had been made a corporal, and was considered one of the best soldiers in the company. He looked disappointed but was about to obey, when Dan Sherman spoke up, “ Captain, you had better countermand that order. Harry, tell the Captain what you have been doing.”

Harry then told Lawrence that he had been training Bruno to stand guard. To try him he said a couple of nights before he and a few others had gone to the woods and lain down as if to sleep. Some soldiers of another regiment were dressed as guerillas, and were instructed to try and creep up on them, and surprise them. They found it to be

impossible, Bruno detected them and gave warning every time.

“If he is that good a picket he shall surely go,” said Lawrence. “Heh! old fellow, do you want to go?” and he patted the dog’s head.

Bruno wagged his tail vigorously and gave three short yelps, so he was allowed to go along. Lawrence noticed that the dog did not travel in the road with the troop, but was generally scouting, sometimes ahead, sometimes on the side, and at all times alert and watchful.

A march of some fifteen miles brought them to the home of the refugee, but where his farm buildings had stood formerly were only heaps of ashes. All his stock, tools, and everything portable had disappeared.

“I am ruined,” he exclaimed, “but if I can only find my wife and children I shall be content. They may be at Croy’s, if alive. Croy is a Confederate, he has two sons with Price, but he is a good man, not a guerilla. He would take them in if he dared.”

“Where is Croy’s?” asked Lawrence.

“About a mile farther on,” was the answer.

So to Croy’s they went and to the man’s great delight found his wife and children safe.

“I took them in,” said Croy, “although I realized I was doing a bad thing for myself. Now you

had better take them, and get out of the county as soon as you can."

So the woman and children were put in the wagon and sent back in charge of the detachment of cavalry.

The Scouts were eager to stay and see if they could not find the guerillas and Lawrence was more than willing. When he asked Croy if he knew anything about the guerillas or in what direction they went that gentleman absolutely declined to answer any questions. "If I gave you any information concerning them it would be as much as my life is worth," he said. "If I gave you any false information, and tried to mislead you, you would seek revenge."

Lawrence admired the man's honesty and assured him he had nothing to fear from him, neither would he ask him any questions.

Mr. Croy thanked him, and then added, "I will say that if you meet this gang it will be no child's play. Their leader Jerry Alcorn is a great fighter."

"Who did you say their leader is?" asked Lawrence in surprise.

"Jerry Alcorn. He is a stranger in these parts. Some say —" he stopped and then slowly added, "that he is a brave and skilful leader."

So Jerry Alcorn had deserted Price's army and turned guerilla! This knowledge only made Lawrence more determined to hunt up the gang.

But he found it no easy matter to get any trace of the enemy. To one who has never hunted Missouri guerillas during the war it would seem wonderful how quickly a gang of forty or fifty men could disappear and to all appearances the county be as peaceful as a Sabbath morning.

To most of the inquiries made, the answer would be, "Do n't know anything 'bout any guerillas. Ain't seen any. We 'uns is all peaceful citizens heah."

Others would answer, "Thar hev bin a gang around, but they hev all gone."

But at last Lawrence struck a hot trail and followed it at a swift gallop. Coming to a house, before which a native sat whittling, Lawrence reined up, and asked if any guerillas had recently passed. The man had on a slouch hat, and his eyes were uneasy and shifty, his countenance had what might be called a hang-dog expression.

But to Lawrence's surprise he proved communicative. Yes, he replied, he had seen some guerillas, ten or twelve had passed only a few minutes before. Their horses looked tired, and if he rode fast no doubt they could be overhauled.

"You seem to be a little anxious I should overtake them," said Lawrence somewhat suspicious.

The fellow ejected a goodly quantity of tobacco juice from his capacious mouth, and then drawled,

"Yank, I be. Gol darn them. See that hoss over thar?" and he pointed to a sorry looking specimen grazing in a small field. "Wall, they took a good hoss from me and left that thar thing."

"Are you sure there were not more than ten or twelve?" asked Lawrence.

"Sure, I counted them. Ain't afraid, air ye?"

"Not that I am aware of," replied Lawrence with a smile. "Forward boys!"

No sooner had they started than Bruno who had been scouting in front and had just returned on the full run began acting as if mad. He ran in front of them and then facing them would howl and jump.

When Lawrence turned to ride past him he actually sprang and caught the bridle and hung back.

"Captain Middleton, there is danger ahead," cried Harry. "Bruno would never act like that if there were not."

Lawrence ordered a halt and Dan Sherman rode forward and he and Lawrence held a consultation. Ahead about a quarter of a mile they could see the road had been dug out through a ridge. The road was narrow and the bank on each side quite high and covered thickly with bushes. It was an ideal place for an ambushade. A troop of cavalry caught in that narrow road could be slaughtered without mercy.

"It will never do to ride through there without investigating," said Dan.

"We cannot investigate without dismounting," answered Lawrence, "and that would divide our little force."

"What can we do? I do n't feel like running away," growled Sherman.

Lawrence glanced back at the house they had just left. The man was still in front regarding them anxiously, and seemed to be making signals with one hand.

Lawrence thought a moment and then said, "Dan, let's try to draw them out if they're there."

"How?"

"Back about a mile you see the road goes over the brow of a hill. Once back of that brow you cannot be seen. Take the company, ride rapidly as if in retreat until you get out of sight, then halt, face about in line of battle, and be ready for anything that comes. I will keep four men and stay and interview that fellow back there. My idea is that seeing me with only four men, they will try to capture us."

"For God's sake be careful if you try that, Captain," exclaimed Dan.

"Do n't worry — only be ready for them if they follow me."

Dan saluted and rode back crying, "Company

about wheel, all but the first four. Forward! Gallop!" And away they went in a cloud of dust.

The four men left with Lawrence looked at him wonderingly and then at the disappearing troop. "Boys, keep cool and be ready for any emergency," said Lawrence. "First I want a little more talk with that scoundrel back there. Keep your carbines ready and don't let him get the drop on any of us, if he should try."

They slowly rode back to the house but before they reached it, the fellow turned and went in.

"Hello," shouted Lawrence. "Come out here. I want to ask you a few more questions about those guerillas."

There was no answer, then one of the troopers suddenly exclaimed, "By Jove! There he is running away and he has a gun." He drew his own carbine and fired. The shot must have struck his arm for he dropped his gun, but he ran on gesticulating wildly with his left hand.

Lawrence looked down the road towards the cut and the effect of the shot was plainly seen. Men came tumbling out of the bushes into the road in great excitement. They looked for a moment and then disappeared to appear in a few moments on horseback. They came sweeping on with blood-curdling yells, at their head their leader on a powerful gray horse.

“Let them come on until I give the word,” said Lawrence. “Then fire, wheel and ride on as if Satan were after you.”

The men sat like statues on their horses, but they thought Lawrence was letting the foremost men come perilously near before he gave the command to fire. At last the order was given, their carbines blazed, then they turned and fled. Lawrence waited a moment to see the effect of the shots. The horse of the leader pitched forward, but the rider struggled to his feet. Lawrence waited no longer, for the balls began to whistle about him.

The fall of their leader, who was no other than Jerry Alcorn, checked the advance of the guerillas. As he arose to his feet he found one of his legs had been badly bruised. Maddened by his pain and the loss of his horse he shouted to his lieutenant who had ridden up, “Do n’t stop, Davis. Catch the devils. Give no quarter.”

The band rode on. Alcorn stopped one of the rear men, ordering him to dismount and help him on his horse. He then started to follow his men, but had not ridden far, when he was startled by wild cheering and over the hill came his men in utter rout, followed by the Yankees.

When Lawrence reached his men he found Sherman had them drawn up in solid array across the road.

"Steady, men," said Lawrence, "let the leaders get well over the brow of the hill. Fire at the word, and then at them with revolver and sabre."

Over the hill came the foremost of the guerillas. They saw the solid line in front, and tried to draw back, but those in the rear pressed on.

Then came the command, "Fire." Nearly fifty carbines blazed. "Charge!" shouted Lawrence. Like a whirlwind the Scouts were on them, shooting, sabring, striking right and left. Taken entirely by surprise the guerrillas stood only for a moment, and then fled in terror, but the remorseless pursuers were among them, dealing death on every side. Many of the guerrillas abandoned their horses and fled into the bushes which lined the road. Others threw down their arms and begged for mercy.

It was soon over. After pursuing the remnant for about a mile Lawrence thought it best to recall his men, and gather up the trophies of victory. He found he had fifteen prisoners and about twenty-five horses. Six of the guerillas were found dead and about a dozen more desperately wounded. Of the troopers one had been killed and five wounded, but only two seriously.

The dead and wounded were taken to the house where the man had tried to deceive them. There were a badly frightened woman there and three chil-

dren. Some of the men were about to fire the house on account of the man's treachery, but Lawrence stopped them. "Never let it be said," he exclaimed, "that we make war on women and children or that we wantonly destroy property. Leave that for our enemies. But I see there is a lot of forage here. Give your horses a good feed, and don't let any of the chickens or fat pigs run over you. But take no more than you actually need."

The men smiled and soon fires were blazing and each scout was seen holding over the fire on the end of a pointed stick, the half of a chicken or a savory piece of pork.

Lawrence entered the house and found the woman cowering in a corner with her three children clinging to her in terror. "Do not be alarmed, madam," said Lawrence. "Neither you nor your children shall be harmed. Forage will be taken for our horses and I see my men are helping themselves to some of your chickens and pigs. Beyond this you will not be disturbed."

"I — I heard some of your soldiers say they were going to burn the house," gasped the woman.

"So some of my men proposed," said Lawrence, "to repay your husband for his treachery in trying to send us to our deaths. But you shall not suffer for his sins. If I had him I could hang him with good grace."

Lawrence let his men rest about an hour. The sun had set, and night was near and he did not deem it prudent to remain with his small force where he was.

The wounded guerillas were made as comfortable as possible and left. Lawrence knew his command would hardly be out of sight, before some of the gang would be creeping back.

In a rough barn some harness was found and two of the captured horses were harnessed to a farm wagon. Into this wagon the Scouts tenderly placed the dead body of their comrade and the seriously wounded. The hands of the prisoners were tightly bound behind them and they were placed on the captured horses. By the side of each prisoner rode a scout with a loaded revolver in his hand.

All through the darkness of the night they travelled, and just as day was breaking reached camp.

The news of their victory spread like wildfire and they were quickly surrounded by a cheering, excited throng.

When the story of Bruno was told, the soldiers nearly went wild. They petted and hugged him and voted him an honorary member of the army. They even hammered out a rough medal, and attached it to his collar, and no soldier of the Legion ever wore his Cross of Honor more proudly than did Bruno his medal.

CHAPTER XVIII

LAWRENCE MEETS BENTON SHELLEY

TO his great satisfaction, Lawrence saw that with the appointment of Halleck a different spirit came over the army. The soldiers began to be more hopeful, and said Halleck would do something, nor were they mistaken. Halleck had a difficult task before him, but he met it with energy, and showed wise generalship. He infused new life into the army, and at once, turned his attention to clearing out the guerilla bands that infested the State. He also began to make preparations to drive Price back from the Missouri River.

It is hard to believe that the Halleck who commanded in Missouri was the same who commanded the great army before Corinth. In Missouri he was alert, daring, and did not hesitate to throw his army against superior numbers. Before Corinth he was weak, vacillating, trembling for fear he might be attacked, and threw away the grandest opportunity offered to any general during the war. No larger or better army was ever gathered on this continent than was at Pittsburg Landing for the advance on

Corinth, and it all came to naught through the inefficiency of Halleck. But that part of the war has nothing to do with this story.*

Hardly had the Scouts returned from their successful encounter with Jerry Alcorn's gang of guerrillas, when Charles Morris made his appearance. When Lawrence returned from St. Louis he found Morris had gone off on one of his lonely scouts. No one knew where. But now he suddenly returned and as usual brought news. He laughingly said he had been hobnobbing with General Rains.

"How is that?" asked Lawrence. "I would have thought you would have been detected. You must have seen Rains when you were with Price."

"Well, to tell the truth," said Morris. "I did n't hobnob with Rains, but I did with his hostler, which is about the same."

"How in the world?" asked Lawrence.

"Oh! I was rather a dilapidated looking specimen of a mulatto boy when I did."

"Do you mean to say you penetrated the camp of General Rains disguised as a negro?"

"Sure. It was easy enough. For true blue Unionism and faithfulness trust the slaves every time. But you have not asked me what news I bring."

*This part of the war is fully dealt with in *The Young Kentuckian Series*.

“ Well, by all means, tell me now.”

Morris went on to say that the brigades of Rains and Spear had fallen back from Lexington, and taken a position along the Osage. “ But there are still a large number of recruits and heavy trains back yet,” he said, “ and by a swift movement they can be intercepted.”

The news was quickly taken to headquarters and General Pope, who was in command at Sedalia, acted with promptness and despatch. A force of about four thousand men, consisting of two brigades, one commanded by General Jeff. C. Davis and the other by General Steele, was selected to make the movement. To deceive Confederate spies, if any might be around, it was given out that the force was to move against Warsaw. To carry out the deception, the force marched south towards Warsaw for several miles, then turned and marched west.

As Morris was guide the Scouts were given the honor of the advance. Towards the close of the second day's march the force was directly across the main roads which led from Warrensburg south, and the routes taken by Price in bringing his recruits and supplies. The Scouts who had been far in advance reported that a force of over two thousand of the enemy were encamped about six miles south.

General Davis ordered all of his cavalry to attack. Although the enemy were three to one they fled

without giving battle. They could hardly have done otherwise for they were recruits, hundreds of them without arms.

When they were closely pressed they would scatter and take to the bush. For a day and a night the pursuit was kept up, and in the end the enemy was completely scattered.

The Scouts and a couple of companies of cavalry called the Merrill Horse pursued the portion which had kept directly south. They relentlessly kept up the pursuit until they rode into the outposts of General Rains, a little north of the Osage

Here they captured a picket post and two loaded wagons, but just as they were getting off with their prisoners and booty, a company of cavalry came charging down on them. Sending back his prisoners Lawrence formed his company to meet the charge.

“Stand firm,” said Lawrence. “Have your carbines ready, but not a shot until the command, then fire and charge with sabre.”

On came the Confederates, yelling and firing, but most of the shots went wild.

To Lawrence’s surprise he saw that the leader of the charging squadron was no other than Benton Shelley. Lawrence’s jaws came together with a snap. He believed that if they met, one or the other would die, and he nerved himself for the conflict.

So close did Lawrence let the charging column come that some of his men began to get nervous. At last there rang out the word, "Fire," and fifty carbines blazed. Half a score of men and horses went down.

Hardly had the smoke lifted when the Scouts were upon them. Sabre rang against sabre. There were wild yells, horrid oaths, and cries of agony. Straight to Benton's side Lawrence fought his way.

The Confederates began to give way, and Benton like a mad man was trying to check the panic when Lawrence rode on him. Swiftly Benton turned to defend himself, and as he did so recognized his assailant. A look of deadly hatred came over his face.

"So it is you," he cried with an oath. "Curses on you. Now you or I die."

Their swords clashed, and for a moment the issue was doubtful. Benton fought like a demon, but Lawrence was the cooler of the two. With his trusty sword, the sword of Bunker Hill, he parried every stroke, carefully watching for an opening. At last there came an opportunity for a downward blow, a blow that if not parried would have cleft Benton's skull in twain.

Benton saw the blow coming and just had time to interpose his sword before it fell. But so powerful was the blow that it beat down Benton's guard, and the keen edge of Lawrence's sword bit into his head.

not deep enough to kill, but deep enough for the blood to gush out blinding him for a time.

Just then Benton's horse was struck down by a ball. But wounded as he was and one leg held fast by his horse, Benton had no thoughts of surrendering. In fact he believed that Lawrence would give no quarter. He blindly felt with his hand and drew a revolver from the holster on his saddle. But Lawrence sprang from his horse, struck the revolver from his hand, and with the point of his sword touching his breast, ordered him to surrender.

"I surrender," said Benton with a growl, "for I have no fancy to lie here defenceless, and be stuck like a pig; but if you were here, and I where you are, there would be no quarter."

"Bold words for one in your condition," said Lawrence, "and if I stuck you like the beast you are, I would only do my duty. But it will never be said of me I murdered a wounded enemy. I will let those in higher command deal with you as your crimes deserve."

By this time the combat was over. A company of Merrill Horse had come to the rescue, and the whole squadron that Benton commanded was taken prisoner.

Lawrence gave Benton in charge of two of his men with orders to take him back and procure a surgeon as quickly as possible.

The prisoners were then secured and the command fell back, for they were so close to the Confederate lines a large force could be sent against them. They were not pursued, however, and coming to a large plantation, where there was plenty of forage, the whole command halted. The horses were fed and the men prepared their frugal meal.

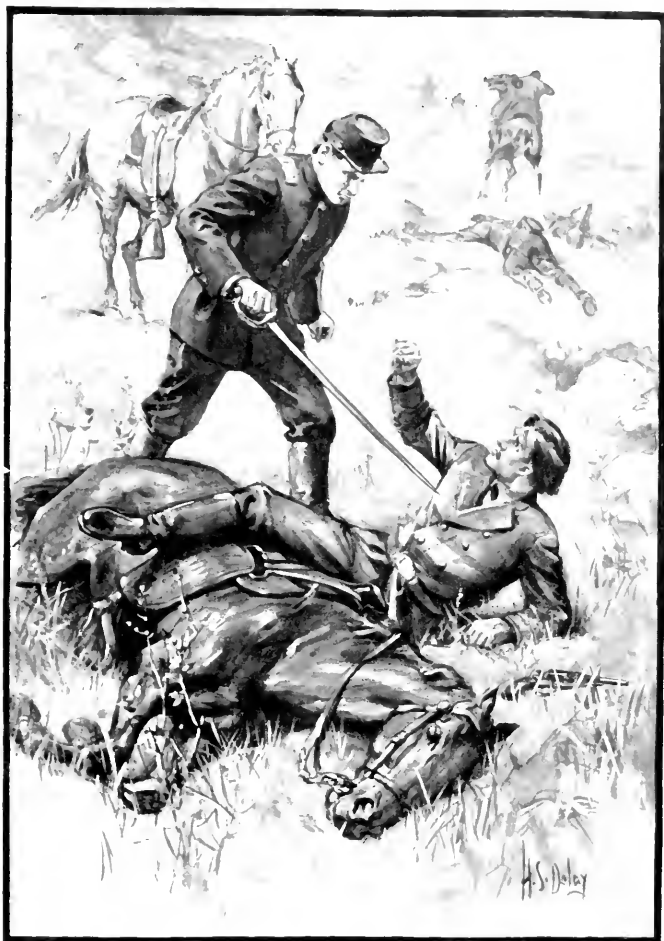
Lawrence thought he would go and hunt up Benton. For aught he knew he might be dangerously wounded. He found him, his head swathed in bandages lying on an improvised bed, and looking pale and weak. Lawrence expected to find him sullen and not inclined to talk, but to his surprise Benton received him cordially. Holding out his hand he said, "Middleton, I am glad to see you. The fortune of war has placed me in your hands, and I could not have surrendered to a braver or more gallant foe."

What did it mean? Lawrence could not understand.

Benton went on, "I want you to forgive me for what I said when you captured me. I was excited, I did not realize what I was saying."

"It does not matter," replied Lawrence. "How is your wound?"

"Bad, you nearly finished me, but if I live, you will see that I am used as a prisoner of war, will you not?"



“I surrender,” said Benton, with a growl

“What do you mean?” asked Lawrence. “We are not in the habit of murdering our prisoners.”

“I—I thought from what you said, you might report me as a spy. I was taken prisoner in honorable combat.”

Lawrence’s face hardened. “So you were this time,” he answered, “but will that atone for St. Louis? How did you come out here? I thought you were on the staff of General Price.”

“So I am, but when the general heard of this advance, he sent me to find out what it meant. But Middleton, you have not answered, you are not going to report me are you?”

“What happened in St. Louis while you were there I might pass by,” answered Lawrence, and his voice became harsh as he spoke, “but what have you to say of leaving a pack of cowardly assassins behind to murder both your step-brother and myself.”

Benton’s face grew ghastly. He tried to speak, but for a time could not, but at last he managed to gasp, “What do you mean?”

“Ask Jerry Alcorn. He can tell you, plotter and would-be assassin that you are,” said Lawrence furiously, maddened at Benton’s duplicity.

“Jerry Alcorn, what of him? What did he tell you?” cried Benton. “He’s a sneak, a deserter. He deserted the army and I am told formed a gang of robbers.”

"A band of guerillas, you mean," retorted Lawrence. "Robbing and murdering in the name of the Confederacy. If it will do you any good I will tell you. I met Jerry's band the other day and wiped half of them out of existence, but unfortunately Jerry got away. But it was Dickey Holbrook, not Jerry who gave you away. When we captured Dickey he confessed the whole thing."

"Dickey is a liar," cried Benton. "He told that story to try and save his own neck. I had nothing to do with that plot, knew nothing of it."

"Benton, you are a liar," said Lawrence coldly. "You make your case no better by your denial. As far as I am concerned, I should not inform on you, but as a soldier I have a duty to perform. Whether that duty should lead me to inform or not, I have not fully decided. I will think it over. But remember you tried to get your step-brother hung."

Benton groaned and asked, "Where is Guilford?"

"If I knew I would not tell you. He is a wanderer, denounced by his father, and you are the heir. That should satisfy you. But I see we are getting ready to move. Can you ride a horse?"

"No. I tell you I am badly hurt; and if you carry out your intention of informing on me I hope I will die."

Benton's haggard face bore out his statement, but

if Lawrence had known it was his fears, rather than his wounds that made him shake and tremble, he would not have been so moved to compassion. As it was he called an ambulance, had Benton carefully placed in it, and made him as comfortable as possible.

All through the night they marched, for the cavalry had orders that after they pursued the enemy as far as safety permitted they were to return and join the infantry under General Davis.

In the morning when the column halted for rest and breakfast, Lawrence thought he would go and see how Benton was getting on. To his great surprise he learned that Benton was missing. He had slipped out of the ambulance sometime during the night.

“He pretended to be powerful bad,” said the driver. “He called for water and was that weak I had to raise his head for him to drink. He kept groaning and I thought he would surely die before morning. Along about midnight he became more quiet, and then I did not hear him at all, and I looked to see if he was dead, and, by jiminy! there was no Reb in the ambulance. He must have slipped out, and escaped in the darkness. Say, Cap, I was n’t to blame. You won’t have me punished, will you?”

"No, he fooled me as well as you," answered Lawrence. "He must have been shamming."

The soldier thanked Lawrence with tears in his eyes. For hours he had been in agony lest he be court-martialled for letting the prisoner escape.

Lawrence could not say he was really sorry that Benton had escaped. To have informed on him and had him executed as a spy, was something from which his whole being shrank.

But to satisfy himself whether Benton had been shamming or not, or whether he crawled out of the ambulance to die, free from the hateful presence of the Yanks, Lawrence hunted up the surgeon who had dressed his wound. When told the facts, the surgeon burst into a hearty laugh. "He has put one over on you, Captain," he chuckled. "He had a nasty cut, lost considerable blood, but his wound was not at all dangerous. I took a few stitches in his head, bound up the wound nicely and told him he would be all right in a few days."

Lawrence had to bear with considerable chaffing over the affair but he bore it with equanimity, for the more he thought of it, the more he rejoiced over the fact that Benton had escaped. Now his conscience was clear.

As soon as his cavalry had returned, General Davis marched his forces northward, for Morris reported that another large body of recruits had just

left Lexington. This force was met a few miles north of Warrensburg, near a hamlet called Milford.

The front of the enemy was protected by a stream called Clear Creek. The banks were steep, and muddy and the water too deep to ford. There was but one way across the stream, a narrow bridge.

"Boys, that bridge must be taken," cried Lawrence. "Can we do it?"

"We can," shouted the men as with one voice.

"Then forward! Stop for nothing after I give the command. Charge."

So swift was the charge that the defenders of the bridge had time only for one volley, before the Scouts were thundering across it and were into them. Then they fled in confusion.

The infantry crossed. The lines were formed and moved forward to the attack, but there was no battle. A white flag fluttered in front and the entire force surrendered.

The prisoners numbered nearly thirteen hundred, among them were three colonels. It was the most notable victory yet won in the State. In his gallant charge across the bridge Lawrence had one man killed and eight wounded.

The object of the expedition now being accomplished, General Davis with his force returned to Sedalia, and in just one week from the day he started, he re-occupied his old camp. The fruits of

this short campaign were fifteen hundred prisoners, over one hundred wagons loaded with supplies, a thousand stands of arms and nearly one thousand horses.

The news of this victory brought courage to the hearts of a despairing army.

A few days after this, General Prentiss, north of the river struck a body of recruits on their way to join Price, and routed them with a loss of two hundred killed and wounded and fifty prisoners. Thus the year 1861 closed with brightening prospects for the Federals as far as the State of Missouri was concerned.

But the eight months of the war had been sad ones for the North. Instead of ending the war in a few months as every one thought, it was now seen it had hardly commenced. In the East the Federals had been driven back, and the Confederate flag floated in sight of Washington. In Missouri there had not been held all that Lyon had won.

During the first months of the war Missouri could be called the dark and bloody ground of the conflict. During the year 1861 there had been fought on the soil of Missouri over seventy engagements. Of these two at least were bloody battles, Wilson Creek and Belmont. The capture of Lexington was the severest blow inflicted on the Federals.

So far no other State had felt the horrors and ravages of war as had the unhappy State of Missouri. Terribly was it paying for the disloyalty of those who tried to drag it out of the Union.

After the successful raid of General Davis and the capture of the recruits, General Price, disheartened, drew back his lines, and established his headquarters at Springfield. The fifty thousand troops he had called for had not been forthcoming, and the few thousand that had responded had been captured or dispersed.

Judging from the past, Price thought the Federal commander would not attempt an advance in winter, so he gave orders to his army to erect winter quarters, as he expected to remain undisturbed in Springfield until Spring.

Halleck was not disposed to let Price remain quiet. The authorities at Washington had also seen their mistake and were now anxious to retake what Hunter had given up, so a winter campaign was decided upon.

While the preparations for the campaign were going on, Lawrence received a letter from Lola Laselle, which contained the most extraordinary news, news which filled him with amazement. What the news was will be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIX

RANDOLPH HAMILTON

THOSE who have read the first book of this series, "With Lyon In Missouri," may wish to know how Lawrence's young friends who went into the Southern army fare. One of these young men, Benton Shelley, has already appeared in this volume; but Benton was the black sheep of the boys with whom Lawrence associated.

There was another youthful companion of Lawrence in the Southern army whom he had always looked upon as his closest friend. This was Randolph Hamilton, the brother of Dorothy. Even the bitter passions of war did not sever the friendship which existed between Lawrence and Randolph, for each respected the views of the other.

Randolph had shown great bravery in battle and was now the First Lieutenant of his company.

While Randolph respected Benton Shelley as a brave soldier, he disliked him, and after the battle of Wilson Creek, that dislike grew. It was intensified when Benton returned from St. Louis. That Guilford Craig was a traitor horrified Randolph:

but when he saw that Benton gloried in his astuteness in unmasking Guilford, rather than grieved over his step-brother's disgrace, he hardly knew which he despised the most.

Randolph was in Rains's brigade, and the day Benton Shelley was captured he had earnestly asked that his company be allowed to go to the rescue, but his request was refused. The Confederate generals believed that it was a general advance of the Federal army. Nor was that belief fully dispelled, until two days afterwards when Benton Shelley appeared, telling the story of his capture and escape.

The story of his combat was listened to with eager interest by those who knew Lawrence.

Benton claimed that his defeat was due to his horse being shot, and that Lawrence struck him over the head with his sword after he was down.

"He meant to kill me," exclaimed Benton, "and boasted afterwards he only spared my life that he might see me hung."

A look of incredulity came over the faces of both Edward Middleton and Randolph Hamilton when they heard this. "I don't believe one word of it," said Randolph to Edward when they were alone. "It was not like Lawrence."

"Neither do I believe that Lawrence struck him after he was down," said Edward. "Benton would hate to admit that he was defeated in single combat."

It was months before they learned the true story of that fight. Soon after General Price had established his headquarters at Springfield, and his army was resting in fancied security, a letter came to Randolph (for secret communication was still kept up with St. Louis) which filled him with dismay. The letter was from his father and told him his mother was very ill, and that she continually mourned the absence of her son.

“The doctor thinks,” wrote his father, “that if she could only see you, it would do her more good than all the medicine, and perhaps might save her life.”

Enclosed with the letter from his father was one from Dorothy, and sad as his heart was over the illness of his mother, he had to smile when he read Dorothy’s letter.

It told all about the accident that had befallen her, and how she was rescued by Lawrence. The following is an extract from the letter:

I am just mad at myself. I do n’t see why if anything happens to any of us, that odious Lawrence Middleton has to be around. He had to save you from the Dutch mob, and now me from being trampled on by a horse. Why could n’t it have been some one else? I hate him and would almost rather have been killed than have him save me. [“Oh! no, you had n’t, Puss,” this by Randolph.] He was awfully nice and looked grand in his captain’s uniform. That made me

hate him all the more. Every time my ankle gives a twinge I have to think of him, and that makes me madder than ever.

P. S. Some of the girls have told me that Lola Lasselle boasts (you know I never speak to her) that she corresponds with Lawrence Middleton. Well, who cares? I am sure she is welcome. They are both of a piece, miserable Yankees. Oh! how I hate them.

“Puss does n’t hate Lawrence half as much as she thinks she does,” exclaimed Randolph as he folded up her letter, “but if that Captain Middleton is n’t careful, I will have a bone to pick with him. Corresponding with Lola, is he? Now as a boy, I always had a friendly feeling for Lola. Believe she will make one of the handsomest girls in St. Louis, and what a kind little heart she has! But no use worrying. Time enough yet. Lola is only a little girl, and for me, I may get killed before this blamed war is over.”

Randolph now read his father’s letter over again, and thought no more of Lola or Lawrence but only of his mother, and the tears came into his eyes as he read.

“Poor mother!” he sighed. “Gladly would I charge to the cannon’s mouth, if I could but see her. Curse this war! What fools we are, both North and South. Killing each other, and for what!”

Older and wiser heads than Randolph’s often asked that question during the war.

Randolph remained in deep thought for some time then started up, exclaiming, "I will try it."

He sought an interview with General Price, showed him his father's letter and said, "General, in all probability the Federals will let us alone until Spring. Grant me a furlough to go to St. Louis to see my mother."

The general shook his head. "My dear Lieutenant, I would willingly do it, if St. Louis was within our lines, but I cannot send one of my best officers into the enemy's lines to be caught and executed as a spy."

"I know there are many passing in and out all the time," replied Randolph. "What they can do, I can do. Captain Shelley made it all right."

"But see what a narrow escape he had."

"That is because he went on a dangerous mission, and then foolishly put his head in the lion's mouth, so to speak. General, as you loved your mother, grant my prayer. I will return a better and braver soldier than I am, and will bless you till the end of my life."

The general was deeply moved. "Go, Lieutenant," he said in a husky voice, "and may God go with you and bring you safely back."

Thanking him over and over, Randolph went to make hurried preparations for his journey and

started the next day. He rode a splendid horse and made good time, but dangers lay thick before him and he had to be careful.

He nearly lost his life once. A guerilla captain sought to trade horses with him, and became angry when he refused. It was only his uniform that saved him.

The country was also full of Federal scouting parties chasing down bands of guerillas, and from these parties he had many close escapes.

As he neared St. Louis, his danger became greater, but he found stanch friends who guided him, and when necessary concealed him. At last he came into the hands of those who conducted the underground railway, and one dark night he was guided into the city, and up to the door of his father's house.

He halted by the door for a moment with a beating heart. Glancing upwards he saw a light burning in his mother's room. He could see shadows on the curtains as the inmates passed to and fro. His heart stood still; it was late, past midnight. Was his mother dead or dying?

Mustering up courage he knocked gently on the door. As light as the rap was, the door was at once opened by a gray-haired negro, one who had been a servant in the family for many years. When he

saw Randolph he started back in surprise, and his eyes rolled in terror.

"Shut the door, quick! What are you staring at? Do you think I'm a ghost?" whispered Randolph.

Then the old negro found his voice and raising his hands exclaimed, "Bless de Lawd! It's Massa Randolph, suah."

"Hush, not so loud," said Randolph. "How is mother?"

"Missy bad, powerful bad. Had a bad spell to-night. Doctah went away a little while ago. Said he would be bak. Dat 's de reason I'se heal by de do'. Reckon Missy goin' to die," and the tears streamed down the cheeks of the old negro. Then he went on. "Missy want to see yo' powerful bad. Keeps callin' for Dolph, her honey boy."

Randolph staggered as if from a blow. His mother dying, calling for him. He was glad he had come. A score of bayonets could not keep him from her now. A dangling noose would be brushed aside. By a great effort he pulled himself together.

"Sam, it will not do for me to startle mother. Can you get me to my old room without anyone seeing me?"

"Yes, Massa Dolph. Room jes as yo' left it. Missy would never hab anything touched. Said she

wanted ebbery thing jest as it was when yo' went away."

"Does she go into the room often?" asked Randolph, his voice shaking.

"Good Lawd! Yes. Ebbry day, befo' she got sick, an' stay in a long time. She would shut the do' and more dan once I hab heard her prayin' an' cryin' for —"

"Stop! I can't bear it," cried Randolph, and a great sob shook him from head to foot. Then he cried passionately, "Oh, this war! This war! It is not we who are in the field that suffer most. It is those who stay at home, weeping and praying."

Controlling himself Randolph sought his room. How familiar everything looked! As Sam said, it was just as he had left it. It seemed as if he had only stepped out of it for an hour. Even a garment that he had carelessly thrown across the back of a chair was left as it was.

Randolph looked around with swimming eyes. He began to realize how great the love was that his mother bore him.

"Sam, go and tell father there is some one here to see him. Do n't tell him who it is."

Sam softly went to the door of the sick room, and motioned to Mr. Hamilton who was sitting by his wife's side.

"What is it, Sam?" he asked as he came out.

"Gent'man in Massa Randolph's room want to see yo'."

"In Randolph's room," angrily exclaimed Mr. Hamilton. "How dare you?"

"Massa, he would go thar," cried the trembling negro.

"My God! can it be?" he gasped, and with hasty steps he went to the room, and in a moment more father and son were locked in a loving embrace.

"My son! My son! How did you come? Oh! this is too good to believe, but —"

"But what, father?"

"The danger! The danger!"

"Let us not think of that. How is mother?"

"Near unto death. But your coming may save her life. The doctor said if she could see you it would do her more good than anything he could do. She had a bad spell this evening, but she is resting easier now. The doctor said he would drop in again. We are expecting him any moment. I must hear what he says before you see her. Ah! I hear him coming now. Wait in patience, my dear boy, until I see him."

"Will it be safe for Doctor Strong to know I am here?" asked Randolph. "You know at the beginning of the war his loyalty was somewhat doubted."

"Perfectly safe. The South has no more faithful son now. But to think you must hide as a criminal! It embitters the joy of your coming." Thus saying, his father went out leaving Randolph to his own reflections.

Yes, if it was known that Randolph Hamilton was in St. Louis, he would be hunted like a criminal, hunted more eagerly than a red-handed assassin.

It seemed a long time to Randolph before his father returned bringing the doctor with him. Dr. Strong, an elderly man with a kindly face, greeted Randolph warmly.

"I am glad to see you, my boy," he exclaimed. "Yet I fear you are running a great danger. The Yankees are especially vigilant now, and keep a sharp lookout for any Confederate who may be smuggled in."

"I got in without much trouble," replied Randolph, "and now I am in, all I have to do is to lie low."

"And low it should be," said the doctor. "The fewer who know you are here the better."

"Never mind me now, Doctor. How is mother? Can I see her? Doctor, I must see her. I cannot wait." Randolph's plea was almost a wail.

"I will see. I will see," replied the doctor. "She has been so sick, she may not fully realize the danger you are in, and take your being here as a

matter of course. It is so sometimes with sick people. Your coming may have a happy effect on her. I hope so. Be patient. I will go now and see if I can prepare her for your coming."

Had there in some mysterious way been communicated to the mother the knowledge that her son was near? It would almost seem so; for when the doctor spoke to her she opened her eyes and murmured, "I thought Randolph was here. I must have dreamed it. Why do n't he come?"

"Would you like to see Randolph?" asked the doctor kindly.

"Yes, yes," she whispered. "Where is he?"

"I will go and see if I can find him," said the doctor. "Now try and sleep, and when you wake, perhaps he will be here."

Mrs. Hamilton closed her eyes, and seemed to be content.

The doctor returned to Randolph and found him pacing his room like a caged lion. To his look of anxious inquiry, the doctor said, "Yes, you can see her, but on this condition. Show no feeling, no excitement. Meet her as if you had just stepped out of the room and returned. Can you do it?"

"I can do anything so I can look on her face once more."

"Then come."

Randolph started when he saw the wan pale face

of his mother. She lay as if sleeping, yet so still and white was she, it might well have been taken for the sleep of death.

Choking back a sob Randolph by a powerful effort drew himself together. The doctor motioned him to a chair standing by the bed.

Randolph sat down, gently taking one of his mother's hands in his. She opened her eyes and saw him bending over her. "Is that you, Dolph?" she whispered.

"Yes, mother," and he kissed her hand.

"Have n't you been away for a long time, Dolph? I have wanted you so."

"Not so very long, mother, but do n't try to talk. You have been very sick. I will not leave you."

The mother smiled, closed her eyes and soon was sleeping quietly, Randolph still holding her hand.

The doctor turned to Mr. Hamilton, tears glistening in his eyes. "Thank God," he whispered. "The crisis is over. She will live."

A great joy came into the heart of Mr. Hamilton, followed by the terrible thought, what if the boy has given his life for his mother.

Dorothy did not know that her brother had returned until morning, and when she learned that not only was her mother better, and would live, but that Randolph was at home, she nearly went wild with joy. Forgetting her lame ankle she rushed

into her brother's arms, crying and laughing at the same time.

After the greetings were over and things had quieted down, Randolph asked, "How is that lame ankle, Puss?"

"Most well, thank you. See," and Dorothy commenced to pirouette around the floor, but with an "ouch" she sank into a chair.

"Must have twisted it," she moaned.

"Does it hurt much?" asked Randolph sympathetically.

"It did, but it has quit now," replied Dorothy.

With a gleam of mischief in his eyes, Randolph said, "My, that must have made you think of Middleton strongly."

"What do you mean?" cried Dorothy, flaring up.

"Now do n't get mad, Puss. Did n't you write me that every time your ankle gave a twinge it made you think of Lawrence Middleton?"

"I do n't want to hear his name ever again," almost sobbed Dorothy. "Why could n't some one else have dragged me from under the horse? Any man with a particle of courage would have done it. He just happened to be there, that's all. If he had n't been there, in all probability some other man would have been, and I only wish there had."

"That's a little bit ungenerous."

"I do n't care if it is. I only wish it had been

Lola Laselle he rescued. No doubt she would have fallen on his neck and kissed him."

"Gee! Do n't I wish that could happen to me. I have a grudge against Middleton myself, he is getting too thick with Lola."

"You do n't mean to say you care anything for Lola Laselle?" asked Dorothy in astonishment.

"Why not? She is a mighty fine girl, and as pretty as you are, my sister," replied Randolph banteringly.

"Randolph, you are fooling. Do n't you know her sister is engaged to a Yankee major?"

"That settles it," laughed Randolph. "To think of marrying into a family that harbors a Yankee major. Horrible!"

"Horrible! It's treason to the South," cried Dorothy, "and Randolph, if you ever speak to that chit of a Lola Laselle, I will disown you as a brother."

"That's consoling, but do n't worry. I shall not speak to her this time. It's a little too dangerous. I suppose I will have to leave Middleton a clear field," and Randolph heaved a mock sigh.

As if to change the subject, Dorothy suddenly asked, "Have you seen Benton Shelley since he returned to the army?"

"Ah! I forgot," said Randolph, "Middleton and Benton met in single combat a couple of weeks ago."

Dorothy turned pale. "Was — was either of them killed?" she asked.

Randolph laughed outright. "I caught you that time, my sister. Do n't want Lawrence killed as bad as you thought you did, do you?"

For answer Randolph received a smart slap on the cheek, and Dorothy burst out crying. "I — I was thinking of Benton," she sobbed.

"Well, neither one was killed," answered Randolph, and he gave her an account of the fight. Then he said, "There, Dorothy, I am sorry I teased you. You are a true daughter of the South, and I am proud of you. I am going to look around and pick out the handsomest, bravest, and most gallant officer in the Southern army for you. But do n't think of Benton Shelley, he is brave enough, but I do n't like him. Let's see, there is Edward Middleton, brave as a lion and as gallant a gentleman as ever drew sword. If this war continues long he will be a general. To be sure he is older than you, but that's nothing. You will be a young lady before the war is over. Better think of it, Puss, whenever —"

"Whenever?" asked Dorothy.

"Whenever that ankle gives you another twinge and makes you think of —"

Randolph did not finish the sentence; he had to dodge to escape another slap, and then a truce was declared.

CHAPTER XX

LOLA TO THE RESCUE

MRS. Hamilton continued to gain, and it was with joy that Randolph saw the color begin to come back into her face. But as she grew better, she began to realize the danger her son was in, and what he had braved that he might see her. She begged him not to linger longer. It was true his presence was known to few, and these few staunch, true friends, but it was impossible to keep his presence unknown to the servants. Each one was sworn to secrecy, and the most dire punishment threatened if they ever divulged his presence. The family rested easy, for Randolph was a favorite with all the servants, and not one of them but declared they would rather die than do anything that would harm the young Massa. But it was destined to be otherwise.

Dorothy had a pretty mulatto girl for a maid, and the maid had a lover; and although the lover had been forbidden the house, the two managed to meet. At one of these meetings the maid boasted she knew a great secret which was never to be told. Of

course the lover was curious, and under the promise that he would never tell, the girl told him. The lover was rather a bright mulatto, one on whom the chains of slavery rested heavily. He believed like most of his race that a victory by the North meant freedom; therefore he lost no time in informing a Federal officer of what he had been told.

Just at this time, also, a newspaper published a scare, saying that it had reliable information that the Confederate armies at Columbia, Kentucky and in southeast Missouri were to move up the Mississippi on St. Louis, and at the same time General Price was to move up from Springfield, that the two armies were to unite and capture the city. Not only this, but the paper stated that Confederate officers had entered the city in disguise, and were secretly organizing the disloyal element, so as to help when the opportune time came, and it behooved the Federal authorities to be vigilant. For these reasons the story of the mulatto was at once acted upon.

Randolph's stay in the city was necessarily short, his furlough giving him only two weeks, and he was to start back the next day. So far he had not been out of the house, and he longed to walk around the city and see what was going on. Both his father and Dorothy pleaded with him not to incur the danger.

“Father, I have been cooped up here for two

weeks," said Randolph. "Do let me get a breath of fresh air, and have a look at the city. I want to see what the Yankees are doing. The day is cold and disagreeable, and I can muffle up, so no one will know me."

Much against his better judgment, Mr. Hamilton gave his consent. Little did he think that Randolph's going would prove his salvation.

He had been gone but a short time, when to the consternation of Mr. Hamilton a body of Federal troops appeared and formed a cordon around the house.

"All is lost! My poor, poor boy!" he groaned. Then he realized that Randolph was not at home, and that he might escape. Surely he would not try to enter the house when he saw the soldiers. The officer in command of the soldiers was now thundering at the door.

Mr. Hamilton cautioned the servants not to get excited, go about their duties as usual, and if questioned, deny all knowledge of Randolph.

He then opened the door. "Good day, gentlemen," he exclaimed coolly. "May I ask the meaning of this intrusion?"

The officer was somewhat taken aback at this coolness, but recovering himself quickly said, "I am sorry, Mr. Hamilton, but we are under the necessity of searching your house. We have reliable informa-

tion that your son, an officer in Price's army, is in hiding here. Has been here for several days gathering information."

Mr. Hamilton drew himself up proudly. "If my son were here you could not expect me to give any information, but, Thank God! he is not here. Of course you will search the house."

"Certainly," replied the major.

"Then I have one request to make. Search as thoroughly as you please, but as quietly as possible. My wife has been very sick, and any excitement might prove fatal. As you have loved ones at home do not let her chamber be invaded by a squad of noisy soldiers, and let me go to her."

"That room may be the very one we wish to search the most," replied Major Crosby, "but I will heed your request all that I possibly can. Here Lieutenant Campbell," turning to a young officer, "accompany Mr. Hamilton to the chamber of his wife; remain there and see that no one enters or leaves the room until I come."

Lieutenant Campbell saluted, and then said to Mr. Hamilton, "Come. Understand you are to go straight to your wife's chamber and remain there."

"I understand," replied Mr. Hamilton. Then turning to Sam, who stood by open-mouthed and trembling, he said, "Sam, show these gentlemen through the house; show every nook and corner,

every closet, the basement, let not a place where a rat can hide escape.

"I am ready now," to the lieutenant.

Lieutenant Campbell had a sharp eye, but his countenance was open and frank. When he entered the sick chamber, and saw the pale countenance of Mrs. Hamilton, remembrance of his own mother flashed through his mind. He would treat her as he would have his own mother treated in like circumstances.

As Mr. Hamilton entered he gave his wife a look which meant much. "Dear, this is Lieutenant Campbell, a Federal officer, but a friend," he said. "Do not be alarmed, he will remain a while. I will explain later."

Lieutenant Campbell's quick eye took in the room. He saw there was no possible place for anyone to hide, and he withdrew to the door. Mr. Hamilton talked to his wife to allay her fears and afterwards warmly thanked the lieutenant for his courtesy.

"It's nothing," said Campbell. "All Yankees are not beasts."

Mr. Hamilton looked at the lieutenant wonderingly. "You called yourself a Yankee," he said, "with us no fouler name can be applied to a man."

The lieutenant smiled. "The grandest names on the pages of American history," he answered, "are names of Yankees. I am proud to be called one."

Mr. Hamilton did not answer. To him it was almost like a man being proud of having African blood in his veins.

The search was over, and of course fruitless as far as finding Randolph was concerned. But Major Crosby said to Mr. Hamilton, "I shall be under the necessity of leaving a guard around your house. While we are convinced your son is not on the premises, we found one room that had all the appearances of being lately occupied, and that by a man. You or any inmate of the house are forbidden to leave it until further notice."

Mr. Hamilton bowed and said, "As you please. Your commands shall be obeyed."

While the father's heart was full of fears, he hoped Randolph would see the guard, and not try to enter the house, but hardly had he turned and shut the door when a great hubbub arose in the street. He heard sharp commands, the sounds of running feet, the shouts of the multitude, and then two or three shots rang out. He rushed to the door, but all he could see was the crowd surging down the street, and he was quickly ordered to shut the door.

Randolph all unconscious of what was occurring took his walk around the city without interruption. He kept his eyes and ears open, and was convinced that the Federals were in mortal dread of a move-

ment being made on the city, and his hopes were high that their fears were not in vain.

After walking as long as he thought prudent, he started to return, but as he neared home he was startled to see a crowd in the street and to his dismay saw the house was surrounded by soldiers. His heart gave a great bound, his enemies were after him; in some way it had become known he was in the city. Then a feeling of exultation came over him, his walk had saved him. What safer thing could he do than to mingle with the crowd and look on? Muffled up as he was, he did not believe he could be recognized, and he would have the satisfaction of seeing his enemies baffled. He chuckled to himself when he saw the soldiers leaving, but the smile died when he saw a guard was being left around the house. He would now have to go without seeing his mother again, and with a heavy heart he turned away.

It was now common talk among the spectators that it was Randolph Hamilton the soldiers were seeking, and they, being mostly Southern sympathizers, were not backward in expressing their joy over the fact he was not found. But Randolph did not make himself known, and began to make his way out of the crowd.

Mingling with the throng was a little colored boy, a slave of a near neighbor of Mr. Hamilton's. As

Randolph turned to go his sharp eyes caught a glimpse of his face. Hearing the people saying it was Randolph Hamilton the soldiers wanted, and hardly realizing what he was doing, he pointed to Randolph crying, "Massa Dolph Hamilton? Why, dar he be."

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when he was seized by the collar and hurled to the pavement with such force that he lay senseless. But the mischief had been done. There were Union men in the crowd as well as secessionists, and they attempted to hold Randolph but were hurled back by his friends.

The soldiers had heard, and with fixed bayonets charged through the crowd, scattering it right and left, and with exultant shouts pursued the fugitive. At first they did not fire on account of the crowd, but soon began shooting.

Randolph had the advantage of knowing every inch of the ground, and he dodged across yards and through alleys, but close behind came the soldiers. His breath began to come in gasps, he felt he must soon find refuge or all would be over. He turned into another street, when suddenly about a block in front of him appeared a file of soldiers. There seemed no way of escape. Like a hunted hare he glanced around and saw he was in front of the home of Mr. Rockwell Laselle. Well did he know the

place. Mr. Laselle's son Leon was his favorite childish playmate, the closest friend of his boyhood, but the war had severed the friendship.

Mr. Laselle's lot ran through to the next street, where it was protected by a brick wall, surmounted by iron pickets. But Randolph knew that during the day the gate was usually left open. It was his only hope, and he dodged into the yard and around the house. His heart stood still, the gate was shut, probably locked. Just then the rear door opened and Lola came out. Randolph saw her and like a drowning man grasping at a straw cried, "Lola, save me! For God's sake, save me!"

The girl scarcely comprehended, but she knew Randolph was in some great danger. She forgot there was a war, that a great gulf had sprung up between them, that Randolph's sister looked upon her with contempt; she only remembered that Randolph was her childhood playmate, her boyish admirer, the friend of her brother.

Quick as a flash she opened the door and Randolph dashed in. She closed and locked the door, none too quickly for the soldiers were already pouring around the house.

Just at this time Mrs. Laselle and daughter Elsie drove up to the rear gate, and the footman threw it open, they driving into the yard just as the soldiers came around the house.

Mrs. Laselle much amazed, demanded the meaning of the intrusion. Now it happened that Major Crosby, who was in the command of the soldiers, was the accepted lover of Elsie Laselle. He would rather lose his right hand than offend mother or daughter, and it took him some little time to explain the situation.

Meantime Lola stood in the house, thinking hard. She heard the soldiers, then the coming of her mother and sister and knew that in a moment her mother would demand admittance. Turning to Randolph she said, "Go to Leon's room. You know the way."

Randolph lost no time in obeying, for Mrs. Laselle was already knocking on the door, demanding admittance. Lola unlocked the door and Mrs. Laselle's first words were, "Why is the door locked? Where is Dinah or Jennie?"

She stopped suddenly and looked at Lola. The girl was pale as death, and trembling like a leaf. "What is it, mother? What is the matter?" she gasped. "Dinah and Jennie are both out, and I was afraid, so afraid," and Lola threw herself into her mother's arms.

"Poor child," said her mother kissing her, "she is nearly frightened to death. No wonder."

All traces of Randolph were lost. It looked as if he must have in some way got into the house.



She closed and locked the door, none too quickly

Lola was questioned, but her only answer was, "How could he when the door was locked?"

Major Crosby was loath to search the house; he feared he might offend, but he gently broached the subject to Mrs. Laselle, asking if he might put a guard around the house, and await the return of Mr. Laselle.

Yes, she was willing.

The guard was placed, but Major Crosby did not give up the search. The whole neighborhood was scoured, but of course without results. So the major went away, leaving a guard and saying he would be back at eight o'clock.

When Mr. Laselle returned home he was greatly astonished to find the house guarded, and still more so when he learned what had occurred. He laughed at the idea of any one being concealed in the house, especially as Lola said all the doors were locked, but when he knew it was Randolph Hamilton the soldiers were after he looked grave and seemed to be troubled.

At eight o'clock Major Crosby returned, and reported not a single trace of the fugitive could be found, so there was nothing left but to search the house.

Lola heard of the contemplated search, and her heart stood still. What could she do? She thought of a dozen things, and dismissed each as not feasible.

At last she thought of Dinah, the cook. She had returned from her afternoon out, and was as much surprised as anyone over what had occurred. She had been in the family for years, and Lola was to her her blessed child. She would have given her heart's blood for Lola and counted it a joy.

To Dinah Lola took her trouble and sobbed, "Oh! Dinah, it's Randolph. They will hang him if they get him."

"Hang Massa Dolph?" cried Dinah. "It's many a cookie I hab made fur him, bress his heart. I tell you, honey, yo' watch yo' chance an' bring Massa Dolph to my room. I like to see dat sojer who dare sarch Dinah's room."

"Do you mean it?" asked Lola with open eyes.

"Suah, honey, I mean it. Watch yo' chance an' get him heah quick."

The chance was now, for the whole family was in the parlor talking with Major Crosby. Lightly the girl ran to the room where Randolph was and explained the situation to him.

"God bless you, Lola," said Randolph swallowing a great lump in his throat. "I'll never forget you," and taking her hand he raised it to his lips and kissed it as reverently as if it had been the hand of a queen.

Lola blushed scarlet. "Do n't, Dolph, do n't. You know I could n't see you hung," she murmured.

Conducting him down the back way, Lola placed him in the hands of Dinah and fled to the parlor for fear her absence might be noticed.

"Come, chile," said Dinah to Randolph as she led the way to her room. "In the closet dar, an' do n't yo' dare make a noise."

Randolph stepped into the closet and Dinah pushed him into a corner and hung some old clothes in front of him, and piled some old trumpery around his feet. "Dar, yo' stay dar till Dinah tell yo' to come out," she exclaimed.

By this time Major Crosby had called in a squad of soldiers and the house was being searched from top to bottom. While the search was going on, Lola's heart beat like a trip-hammer. But at last the search was over, and nothing discovered.

"It's queer where that fellow could have gone," said the major. "Have we searched every room?"

"Every room," replied Mr. Laselle. "Hold on, there is Dinah's room. Dinah is an old servant and our cook. It's not possible he is there, for Dinah was away and she keeps her door locked. Dinah is a crank on that subject. Her room is her castle, and even her mistress approaches it with care. Still we had better look in."

Lola heard this and grew faint. It was well that all were so intent on the search that her agitation was not noticed.

Dinah was in her room and the door locked. Mr. Laselle rapped gently.

“Who’s dar?” asked Dinah in a gruff voice.

“Your master, Dinah. Open the door.”

“De good Lawd, Massa, I’se jes’ goin’ to bed.”

“Never mind, Dinah, slip on your clothes and open the door. I must see you.”

With much grumbling Dinah was heard bustling around, but at last the door was opened. When she saw the soldiers she started back as if in amazement.

“What da’ heah fo’? What the sojer man heah fo? Ole Dinah hain’t done nothun,” she cried shrilly.

“Of course not, Dinah,” answered Mr. Laselle. “Do n’t be frightened. You know that Rebel spy. Well, Major Crosby thinks he might in some way have slipped into the house, and taken shelter in your room.”

“What da’ yo’ say?” cried Dinah in apparent terror. “White man in ma’ room an’ me goin’ to bed. Oh, Lawd, Lawd! whar will Dinah’s krack’ter be?” She sank into a chair, threw her apron over her head and sobbed violently, rocking back and forth.

Major Crosby and his men simply doubled up with laughter.

“There, there, Dinah,” said Mr. Laselle sooth-

ingly. "This is nothing against your character. Every room —," but he got no farther.

"Yes, it be," wailed Dinah rocking more vigorously. "Yo' jes 'spected ole Dinah of habing white man in her room, an' me a Methody fo' forty years. What will Passum Johnsing say?" and she wailed louder than ever.

"It is evident there is no one here," said Mr. Laselle. "I simply showed you the room so you could be certain of searching the whole house."

"I am satisfied," replied the major, still holding his sides.

"There, Dinah, we are going," said Mr. Laselle. "You are all right, and if I were in your place I should say nothing to Parson Johnson about it. Major Crosby simply had to do his duty."

No sooner were they gone, than Dinah took her apron from her face and laughed as heartily as she had pretended to cry. "Fool 'em dat time," she gurgled.

Major Crosby now ordered the guard around the house to be withdrawn, and for himself was not slow in accepting an invitation to stay a while. He was profuse in his apologies, but Mr. Laselle stopped him saying, "Now that it is all over, Major, I can truly say I am glad you did not find the young man. I know Randolph well and a fine fellow he is. I suppose if he had been caught he would

have been considered a spy. I am sure he is no spy. His mother has been lying at the point of death, and no doubt he stole into the city to see her."

"If that is the case," replied the major, "I do n't think I will worry much over his escape."

If Lola could have heard this she would have felt much better, but pleading a headache, she had gone to her room. She was glad Randolph had escaped, but her conscience troubled her. It was the first time she had ever deceived her parents, and she thought she must be a very wicked girl. What made it worse, she could not feel sorry for what she had done. It was little sleep she got that night, and in the morning she had a headache in earnest.

"It was the excitement of last night," said her mother. "No wonder, here all alone, and all that hullabaloo."

Her mother's pity did not ease the girl's troubled conscience and she decided to write to Lawrence. She just had to tell somebody.

"I just could n't help it," she wrote. "To think that if they caught Randolph they would hang him made me wild. I feel awful sorry about deceiving papa and mamma, but I am not sorry for what I have done. I would do it right over again if I had to."

It was this letter which so surprised Lawrence, and he made haste to answer it.

Three or four days after the escape of Randolph Lola met Dorothy on the street. She was about to pass her as usual with head high, when to her surprise Dorothy caught her by the arm and whispered, "Come, walk with me. I want to tell you something."

"I have n't changed my colors," replied Lola a little sharply, for the way Dorothy had snubbed her rankled.

"I know," replied Dorothy, "and I do n't care. Yell for your old Union all you want to, and I will yell for Jeff Davis; but let 's be friends again. Lola, dear Lola, forgive me for the way I have treated you. Father says you are the bravest girl in St. Louis."

"Who told you about it?" asked Lola. "Did Randolph come home?"

"No, he dare not, but he wrote a long letter which we got, and told all about it. I tell you he praised you. He wrote you a letter too, here it is," and she slipped a letter in Lola's hand.

The girls then talked over their differences, and concluded to be good friends again, even if one was Union and the other "Secesh."

It would have been better for the country if older people had come to the same conclusions.

As soon as Lola got home she went to her room to read Randolph's letter. As she read her cheeks

grew rosy, and her breath came quicker for Randolph was rather extravagant in his praise.

In due time a letter came from Lawrence in answer to her own. It was rather a bulky one, and when she opened it she found it was really two letters. One was written in his usual way, telling of his experiences in camp and on march, and which the whole family enjoyed with Lola, for Lawrence was an interesting letter writer. The other enclosure was marked "Private."

Lola hastily concealed it, and at the first opportunity went to her room to read it. Her heart beat fast, for what would Lawrence say? As she read, her face lighted up, and a happy laugh escaped her. Lawrence approved of what she had done; in fact praised her almost as extravagantly as Randolph had. But when she read the close of the letter her countenance fell a little, for he wrote: "At the time you could not have done differently, it would not have done to have told your father while the soldiers were searching for Randolph. But when it was over and Randolph safe, you should have told him. Tell him now, Lola, and that conscience will not trouble you, for I see by your letter that it does."

With many misgivings Lola concluded to take Lawrence's advice and went to her father and confessed all.

Mr. Laselle was astonished, but to Lola's surprise

she was not scolded. Instead her father kissed her and said, "Lola, I am glad, very glad you told me, but do not tell anyone else. Let it be a secret between us. And, Lola, I will tell you my secret now. I am very, very glad Randolph got away. But that Dinah! So Randolph was in her room all the time. Well, I reckon her 'krack 'ter' will never suffer for it," and Mr. Laselle laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks.

CHAPTER XXI

A RACE FOR LIFE

IT is remarkable what General Halleck accomplished in a few weeks after he took command. He found an army discouraged and dissatisfied, a number of the regiments mutinous. Emissaries had gone among the German regiments, and told them that if they would not obey the commands of General Halleck, either Fremont would be restored or Sigel given the command. But the discontented soon found that Halleck was a general who would see that his orders were obeyed.

The Charcoals and Conservatives were also making the days wearisome for the general, each faction claiming that they represented the Union sentiment of the State.

Added to Halleck's other troubles was the ever present negro question. He was savagely attacked by the German papers saying he was sending the slaves of disloyal masters back into captivity.

Halleck was not the only one having trouble with the negro question. Lincoln's course during the first years of the war in refusing to free the slaves

brought down upon him the wrath of thousands of people.

It was in answer to a letter from Horace Greeley, saying that if he would free the slaves, twenty million people would applaud him, that Lincoln wrote that memorable answer :

“ If I can save the Union by not freeing the slaves, I shall not free them; if I can save the Union by freeing half the slaves, I shall free them; if it becomes necessary to free all of the slaves in order to save the Union, I shall free them.”

This answer shows the preservation of the Union was the great, the burning question with Lincoln; all other questions were subsidiary to that.

Like Lincoln, Halleck did not let popular clamor influence him and firmly pursued the course he had marked out. He quickly saw the great mistake that had been made in falling back from Springfield and at once took measures to rectify it. He reorganized the army in the field, calling it the Army of the Southwest, and placed it in command of General Samuel R. Curtis. Curtis was a West Point graduate, but for years had been in private life. At the commencement of the war he organized the Second Iowa, and went out as its colonel. After events showed that Halleck had made no mistake in giving him command of the army.

By the middle of January the army was ready to

advance. General Price was resting in fancied security, in his winter quarters at Springfield with a diminished army, but with the fond hope that McCulloch would join him in the spring and help him save the State.

The news of the advance was received with hilarious joy by the Union soldiers. The Winter of 1861-62 was a very severe one in Missouri. The roads were rough and frozen, and when thawed became quagmires. The rivers and streams, many of which had to be forded, were filled with floating ice. But nothing daunted the brave hearts of the soldiers; their faces were turned towards the South, it was all they asked.

In vain the snow buffeted them, or, what was worse, icy rains beat upon them, they pressed forward without murmur or complaint. They were after Pap Price; they had many an old score to settle with him and ached for an opportunity. Back over the dreary miles they had already traversed four times they marched with hearts full of hope.

Price, thinking it was impossible for the Federal army to move in such weather and over such roads, was resting easy, but he received a rude awakening, and beat a hasty retreat, leaving a large amount of stores behind him.

Springfield was occupied on February thirteenth

and the Stars and Stripes for the third time floated over the court house.

To no soldiers did the news of an advance come more welcome than to Lawrence's troop. The Scouts were made a part of Major Bowen's command, which had the advance. When Springfield was reached, it was rumored that General Price with his whole army was on the old battle ground of Wilson Creek, and was there to make a stand and give battle.

To ascertain the truth the Scouts were ordered to make a reconnaissance. They did so, but found no enemy. As Lawrence looked over the battle field all that happened that eventful day came thronging to his mind. Here was where Lyon fell. Lawrence stood on the sacred spot, and his tears fell thick and fast, as he thought of his beloved chieftain. He found the place where he fell when the bullet from the pistol of Benton Shelley came so near ending his career. Near by in a bramble lay a grinning skull. Lawrence shuddered as he looked at it. The hill now lay bleak and the leafless trees and bushes showed the awful effects of the iron and leaden tempest which swept against them. With a sinking heart Lawrence noticed that amid the scrub and bushes, the bones of many of the soldiers who had fallen lay bleaching. Uncoffined and unburied they

lay where they fell, a part of the unknown dead, who gave their lives for their country.

General Curtis made but a short stop at Springfield, only long enough to concentrate his army, and then he pushed on after the fleeing enemy. There was to be no backward step this time. Price must give battle, or leave the State.

Bowen's command was still in advance, and after leaving Springfield it was almost a continual skirmish with the rear guard of Price's army, and the Scouts found plenty to do. At Sugar Creek just before the Arkansas line was reached, the Confederates made quite a determined stand. The Scouts, however, charged, scattering them, and taking quite a number of prisoners.

Among the prisoners to Lawrence's surprise was Dickey Holbrook. When Dickey saw Lawrence he suddenly drew his hat over his face and drew back behind the other prisoners, but it was no use. Riding up to him Lawrence said, "Hello, Dickey, you do n't seem glad to see me." Dickey stood silent, trembling with fear. Lawrence continued mercilessly, "You do n't expect to be treated as a prisoner of war, do you, Dickey? Why should I not take you and have you hanged at once?"

Then Dickey found his tongue. How he begged for his life; he fairly grovelled in the dust. Great drops of sweat ran down his cheeks, and his face was

ghastly. Lawrence looked at him a moment in contempt, then said to the guards, "Take him back with the other prisoners. I will attend to his case later."

The next day Lawrence went on a scout and was gone two days, and when he returned he learned Dickey had escaped. "Of all the slippery fellows!" exclaimed Lawrence. "He is as hard to hold as a greased pig. But if I get him again, I will see he does n't get away."

At Cross Hollows, which is just over the Missouri line in Arkansas, it was expected that Price and McCulloch would make a desperate stand, but the position, which naturally was a very strong one, was evacuated after a slight skirmish. The cavalry pushed on, and captured both Bentonville and Fayetteville, important towns in Northwestern Arkansas.

Price had been driven not only from Missouri, but from Northwestern Arkansas as well. Though the success of General Curtis had been great, the object of his campaign had not been achieved,— the defeat and destruction of Price's army. That army, still intact, was hidden away among the Boston mountains, ready to make a tiger-like spring at the first opportunity.

It was imperative for General Curtis to find out what was going on among those mountains, and the dangerous duty was given to Lawrence and his Scouts. During the advance the Scouts had per-

formed the most valuable service, and General Curtis had come to rely upon them for most of his secret information. Always in front, or on the flanks of the army, they met with many exciting adventures, breaking up guerilla bands and capturing stragglers from Price's army.

Much of the scouting was done at night and much was done that could not have been done, if it were not for the dog, Bruno. He seemed to fully understand that his duty was to hunt men instead of birds or animals, and well did he perform it. More than once he saved the Scouts from being surprised, or of running into some trap which had been set for them. So valuable had the dog become that Lawrence would have as soon thought of going on a scout without ammunition as without Bruno.

Lawrence knew he was now called upon to render a service which might mean death, but neither he nor a single one of his men hesitated. All were ready and eager to undertake the service.

The plan was to ride as near the Boston mountains as prudent, then wait for night and push on. If parties of the enemy were met they hoped in the darkness they could pass themselves off as Confederates. If discovered, a fight and a flight would be their only safety.

This plan was followed out and proved successful. Several small parties of the enemy were met,

generally foraging parties, absent without leave. After gaining all the information from these parties that he could, Lawrence would roughly order them back to their commands, threatening them with arrest if ever found absent again without leave. They were then allowed to go, much to the disgust of Bruno, who could not understand it.

Morris, who was the guide of the party, at last informed Lawrence that they had penetrated into the mountains as far as prudent and they had better find a suitable hiding place, and wait until morning. They were following a road in a gorge, and it was some time before they could find a place where they could leave it. At length they came to where a ravine opened on the gorge and into this they turned. It was very dark, the way rough and rocky, and they had to advance feeling their way, foot by foot, the men leading their horses. They soon came to a cliff that barred all further progress, and although they were only a short distance from the road, they concluded to stay where they were and make the best of it. And there in the darkness, each man, with his back against a rock or a tree, the bridle of his horse looped around his arm, tried to get what little rest he could.

The morning at length came and gladly the Scouts hailed it, for they were stiff and sore and shivering with the cold. Their breakfast consisted only of

army crackers and raw bacon, for they did not dare to light a fire. Their horses fared better, for they had brought with them a liberal feed. The mountains rose round about them shutting out the world.

"This seems a safe place to stay," said Morris. "I will look around a little. If I am not back in an hour you may know something has happened."

"Do you go alone?" asked Lawrence.

"Yes, I prefer it. I do not expect to be gone long." Thus saying Morris rode away. He was roughly dressed and might easily be taken for a native, and he could act the part of one to perfection.

Lawrence was very uneasy, but to his relief Morris appeared sooner than he expected. All crowded around to hear his report.

"I followed the gorge about a mile," he said, "when I found it opened into a narrow valley, through which a main road ran. Over the tops of the mountains beyond the valley, I could see the air looked smoky, as if a large army was encamped there. That is what I must find out, and while I am finding out, the troop may as well stay here. This spot is close to the road, but entirely concealed. Not only this, but by ascending the mountains in front, you will not only have a fine view of the whole valley, but of the mountains beyond."

"Then you think the whole Confederate army is

encamped just over the mountains in our front?" asked Lawrence.

"Yes, but I must be sure. There must be no guess work."

"Why not take the troop with you? I see the boys are aching to go."

Morris laughed. "You would be discovered before you got across the valley," he answered, "and then good-bye to the Scouts. No, I must go alone unless I take Bruno. I would take him if I thought I could make him do just what I wanted."

"Why not take me with you?" asked Harry Semans. "You know I can make Bruno do most anything. What is it you want him to do?"

"Keep out of sight, without he is called."

"That is easy. Take me, Morris, you know you and I have been on many a scout together, and I make a capital native boy. The old coat and pants I wear on such occasions are done up behind my saddle now. There is nothing to hinder."

Morris thought a moment and then said, "Harry, I would really like to have you and Bruno go, but I hate to lead you into danger. I could never forgive myself if you should lose your life."

"You would n't have to worry over it long," replied Harry with a grin. "for if I lose my life you will be sure to lose yours."

“Boy, you can come, you are made of the right stuff,” answered Morris.

The troop started to raise a cheer, but was quickly silenced by Lawrence. “Boys, are you crazy?” he exclaimed.

“Most,” spoke up one. “We all want to go so bad.”

It was but the work of a moment for Harry to slip on his old coat and pants, then ruffling his hair, and borrowing the most dilapidated looking hat in the troop, he looked the typical mountain boy — to the manor born. Before starting Harry called Bruno aside and gave him his orders.

“It’s remarkable how that dawg understands,” drawled one of the men. “Dawg-gone if it ain’t.”

“Hang him,” chorused a dozen. “That is at least six times Ben has perpetrated that on us.”

Ben was seized and made to promise he would never do the like again.

As Morris and Harry rode away, Bruno did not immediately follow, but waited a while, and then trotted off down the road, as unconcernedly as if he was going on his own business.

Lawrence concluded to climb the mountain and act as sentinel, leaving the troop in command of Dan. His orders were strict; the road was to be carefully watched, but no Confederates were to be molested, if any should pass along. The troop was

to be held ready to mount at a moment's notice, and Dan was to look up a way to retreat, if the mouth of the ravine should be blocked by the enemy.

Lawrence took three men and stationed them at intervals up the mountain side, so he could more readily communicate with Dan, if he found it necessary.

It was a stiff climb but when Lawrence reached the top a glorious panorama burst upon his vision. The sun had risen and was flooding the mountain tops and the valley with its light. The valley must have been a fertile one, for there were a number of farm houses in sight, but there seemed to be but little life around them. Stock and forage had been swept away; armies had to be fed. The valley now lay bleak and bare beneath the March sky.

Across the valley there was a break in the mountains, and Lawrence knew that a road ran through that break to the other side of the mountains, where a smoky haze lay along the horizon. Yes, Morris was right, an army must lie encamped there.

As Lawrence looked, a regiment of cavalry came riding along the road leading through the valley, and disappeared in the west. Where were Morris and Harry? Had they already crossed the valley or were they waiting? Lawrence had a good glass and with it he swept the valley and the sides of the mountains beyond, but he could see no signs of them.

He fervently prayed that they had crossed the valley in safety.

Morris had told Lawrence to have the troop wait for him until midnight, if he did not come then to wait no longer, for it would mean either he and Harry had been captured, or been obliged to seek some other way back. It was lonely watching for Lawrence. During the day several squads of cavalry passed through the valley, all headed west. Midday came and went, still no signs of Morris and Harry. Suddenly from over the mountain tops came the boom of a cannon. The distant thunder sounded again and again. What did it mean?

Lawrence was all alert. He counted the distant reports as they came, one after the other, until he counted forty, then all was silent. He was puzzled, but suddenly exclaimed, "I have it. Forty guns fired one after the other is a major-general salute. The Confederate army must have another commander."

The sun was half-way down in the west, and still no signs of Morris. Lawrence thought it about time to give up his vigil, but before he left he would take one more look. His glass once more swept the mountain side. Was that some animal running through the scrub? Yes, it was an animal running as if death was after it. It cleared the mountain side and came across the valley in great leaps.

Lawrence's heart stood still. It was Bruno, Bruno

coming to tell him Morris and Harry were in peril. He rather rolled and slid down the mountain side than ran; but quick as he was, Bruno had beaten him. The men had gathered around the dog in great excitement, and Bruno seemed fully as excited as they. He bounded and leaped, he would run a short distance, then stop and look back to see if they were following. When Lawrence came he caught him by the clothes and tried to pull him along.

"Boys, Morris and Harry are in peril," said Lawrence. "Bruno has come to tell us. What shall we do? For myself, I am willing to follow the dog, if needs be into the heart of Price's army, to try and rescue them."

"Lead on and we will follow," cried the men as with one voice.

There was no attempt at concealment now. Through the gorge and across the valley the troop thundered, Bruno leading. Into the mountains on the other side they rode, going they knew not where, but never doubting that the trusty Bruno would lead them right.

The dog kept the main road for about a mile, then turned into a gorge where the way was narrow, rough and rocky, but the troop did not check their headlong speed. Nearly two miles up the gorge Bruno led them, then he stopped and looked up in

Lawrence's face with a low whine. Lawrence knew that meant there was danger ahead.

Halting the troop, Lawrence crept cautiously to the front, and had gone but a few yards when the gorge suddenly opened into a long narrow valley, and what he saw there filled him with horror.

In the centre of the valley not two hundred yards away were forty or fifty horsemen, but most of them were dismounted and seemed to be greatly excited, for they were all talking loudly and gesticulating violently. In their midst stood two men with their hands bound behind them. Quickly Lawrence brought his glass to bear. As he expected the prisoners were Morris and Harry. A few paces away, under a lone tree, two soldiers were scooping out what seemed to be a shallow grave and near the grave lay a still figure shrouded in a blanket.

Three officers stood near by engaged in earnest conversation, and at last one turned away with an impatient gesture, as if to say, "Do as you please."

One of the other officers walked up to where the soldiers were grouped and said a few words. Immediately a wild "Hurrah" was heard, and two of the soldiers rushed to their horses and began to untie a couple of lariats. Lawrence saw and knew what it meant. There was not a moment to lose, and he rushed back to the troop.

"Quick, boys, your blankets!" he cried. "Throw

them around your shoulders to conceal your uniforms. By fours! Forward! Follow me!"

The Scouts understood. In a trice their blankets were around their shoulders and they were ready. "Forward trot!" ordered Lawrence. He knew he must not alarm the Confederates with undue haste. When the valley opened up before them they saw Morris and Harry had already been led under the tree and the ropes were being placed around their necks. The noise of the approaching Scouts attracted the attention of the Confederates and looking about they saw the gray-blanketed horsemen coming.

"Wait a minute." sang out one of the number. "Heah comes another company to see the fun."

"Wait nothing! Swing them up," roared an officer. Hardly had the words left his lips when Lawrence's voice rang out "Deploy on left! Charge."

Like a thunderbolt the Scouts were on them. Taken completely by surprise, half of them raised their hands in submission, the rest fled in terror. The fight, if fight it could be called, was over in two minutes. Some half dozen who had tried to escape had fallen; the rest of the forty were either prisoners or had escaped.

Morris and Harry were quickly released, but hardly had this been done when they heard cheering and the thunder of horses' hoofs, and looking, they

saw a full company of Confederate cavalry coming at full speed.

“Back to the gorge,” shouted Lawrence. Morris and Harry sprang on two of the captured horses, and the whole troop fell back into the mouth of the gorge where they halted to await the attack. Swiftly it came, but two or three volleys sent the Confederates staggering and bleeding back into the valley.

“It is no use following,” said one of the Confederate officers. “Fifty men can hold a thousand in that gorge.” So the pursuit was given up.

At the head of the company that appeared so opportunely for the Confederates was Benton Shelley. He was on his way to General Pike with important orders, and the company was his escort. When he learned the full history of the affair, and who the escaped prisoners were his fury knew no bounds.

“Fools! Dolts! Idiots!” he cried. “The only one among you who had any sense was Lieutenant Pelham. Had you followed his advice and taken the prisoners to General Price, there would have been no reward too great for you. Do any of you know who the officer was who led the rescue party?”

No one seemed to know until a soldier, one who had surrendered at the first onslaught, spoke up, “I

am almost sure I heard one of his men call him Captain Middleton."

"That 's the one. I knew it," screamed Benton, almost beside himself. Turning to the cowering officers who had wanted to hang Morris and Harry, he shook his fist in their faces and roared, "If Price don't hang you for this, I am mistaken."

Gladly would Benton have pursued the Scouts, but they had such a start he felt it would be useless, besides his orders were imperative to find Pike as quickly as possible.

It was fortunate the Scouts were not pursued, for their horses were badly winded in the furious ride to save Morris and Harry.

All through the night they rode and just as day was breaking they heard the welcome challenge of the Federal picket.

Lawrence lost no time in making his report to General Curtis. It was that General Earl Van Dorn had been appointed commander of the combined armies of McCulloch, Price, and Pike; that the strength of the combined armies was estimated at from 20,000 to 30,000; and that Van Dorn had already issued orders for the armies to concentrate for the purpose of attacking the Federals.

It was not until they had slept and rested that Morris gave Lawrence a full account of what had befallen him and Harry. "At first," he said, "we

had little trouble. As I expected we met several small parties of Confederates, but we passed ourselves off as refugees from Missouri, going to an uncle who lived down on the Arkansas River. From those we met we learned that the armies of McCulloch and Price were encamped just over the mountains, and that Van Dorn had been appointed commander in chief.

“At the first opportunity we concealed our horses, and climbed the mountain, from the top of which we had a fine view of the armies, and could form an intelligent opinion of their numbers. It was while we were on top of the mountain that the salute was fired in honor of Van Dorn.

“When we came down we unavoidably fell in with a party of about thirty Rebels under the command of a Captain Bostick. When he found we were from Missouri he was very talkative, and asked me lots of questions, and wanted me to enlist in his company, saying that Van Dorn had issued orders for the army to concentrate, and that before three days the Yankees would be swept from the face of the earth. I told him it was impossible for us to enlist before we saw our uncle.

“He kept us so long I began to get uneasy and was inventing some excuse to get away when to my consternation, another party numbering about thirty came up. They were commanded by a big brutal

lieutenant by the name of Peters. He saluted Bostick with a 'Hello, Captain, better get to your regiment; there is fun ahead. Van Dorn means business!'

"Then noticing us he asked who we were. Bostick explained, and said he had been trying to get us to enlist, but we had refused.

"'Make them enlist,' roared Peters. 'Here, boys, you git in my company, and that quick,' he said with an oath. 'I will make soldiers out of you.'

"This drew the attention of the whole company to us. One of them rode up and looked me squarely in the face. My heart stood still for it was Dickey Holbrook. I knew my time had come.

"'Hello, Guil —' He never said more. As quick as a flash I drew my pistol and shot him dead.

"Of course all was pandemonium. I expected, and it was what I wished, that the soldiers would kill Harry and me at once. But they did n't. I think they were too surprised at what had happened. Then they demanded why I had killed Dickey Holbrook.

"I told them he had wronged my sister up in Missouri. The story of going to my uncle was a subterfuge. I had followed Holbrook with the intention of killing him on sight. I had done so.

"Then things broke loose again. I was denounced as a liar, and some wanted to hang me right

away; and others were for looking into my story, and finding whether true or false.

“The argument grew warmer and the wrangling lasted for some time. Then it was that Lieutenant Pelham of Bostick’s company spoke up. He told them he believed I was a liar, but in his opinion they had drawn a prize and not to hang us, but take us to General Price; and pointing to me said he believed I was Guilford Craig, the notorious traitor and spy, on whose head a big price was set.

“But the men would not hear it, it was only a trick to get me away, and there came nearly being a fight between Bostick’s men and Peters’ command. At last Bostick gave in and told Peters to do as he pleased. It was this wrangling that saved our lives, and gave you time to get to us.”

“But Bruno, where does he come in?” asked Lawrence.

“Let Harry tell, that is his part,” answered Morris.

“I gave Bruno orders,” said Harry, “to keep near us, but not to come to us unless called. You know how faithfully he obeys. When Morris shot that fellow I thought it was all up with us, but I had presence of mind to whistle for Bruno. He was hiding near the mouth of the gorge and came bounding to me. When near enough to hear I shouted ‘Back, Bruno, back! Home quick!’

“ He understood, and turned and was away like a shot. Owing to the excitement over the shooting of Holbrook I think the dog was hardly noticed. Bruno did his work well. I hardly know yet how he could have brought you so quickly.”

“ He must have gone through that gorge through which we retreated,” said Morris. “ But how did he know it was the short route? It was not the way we came.”

“ It was the way he brought us,” said Lawrence. “ Come here, Bruno, old fellow, and tell us how you know so much.”

The dog came and laid his head on Lawrence's knee, but he limped as he came. Lawrence gently raised the foot, which had been cruelly cut.

“ Look!” said Lawrence. “ He must have cut his foot in his mad race. Poor Bruno!”

But Bruno did not look as if he needed pity, instead he gave a bark of delight, and then went to sleep with Lawrence patting his head.

CHAPTER XXII

PEA RIDGE

THE Army of the Southwest had fought its way from Rolla to Pea Ridge, a distance of two hundred and forty miles. It had followed Price all these miles hoping to force him to give battle; but now he was well out of the State, and his army still intact. Not only this but the quarrels between him and McCulloch were to cease, for a new commander had been appointed over both, one that both willingly obeyed.

To the combined armies of Price and McCulloch was to be added the army of General Albert Pike consisting of two regiments of Texas cavalry, and a horde of Indians. It looked as if Curtis had been lured all of these miles from his base, only to be destroyed by an overwhelming force of the enemy.

Curtis had been promised a reinforcement of five thousand men from the Department of Kansas, but General Hunter became involved in a quarrel with General Jim Lane, and the men were never sent. Curtis now only had his own little army to depend on; there was no hope of any aid. As Lyon was left

on his own resources at Wilson Creek, so now was Curtis left at Pea Ridge.

The position of the army was a most perilous one. Not only was it confronted by a vastly superior force, but it had mostly to depend for sustenance on a thinly populated country, a country that had already fed McCulloch's army for months.

For the army to be defeated meant annihilation; but General Curtis never faltered, the hearts of his soldiers never grew faint. They had not followed Price all these months to retreat without giving battle. For months they had longed for the opportunity now presented; the enemy was before them, they would win or perish.

To Lawrence General Curtis gave his warmest thanks for the important service he had rendered, but when Lawrence informed him it was to Morris, now known under his true name of Guilford Craig, that he was indebted more than to him, the general was astonished.

"So you are Guilford Craig," he said taking him by the hand. "I am glad to meet you and to know you. I have heard of the great service you rendered Blair and Lyon, and have often wondered what had become of you. More than once I have wished I had you with me and here I have had you all the time. I now understand why Captain Middleton has been so successful in giving me information."

“Captain,” he said turning to Lawrence, “I want you to take this praise to yourself also. Hereafter I want your troop to act as my body guard, and also do the scouting and secret work.”

“General, you do me too much honor,” replied Lawrence, “but what I can do, that will I do right willingly.”

General Curtis lost no time in preparing for the coming battle. He selected a strong position on Sugar Creek which he fortified. Lawrence was ordered to scout well in front, so as to give the earliest information of the advance of the enemy.

When Lawrence was ready to go on the scout, to his surprise Guilford said he was not going. Since it had become known that he was Guilford Craig a great change had come over him; he was silent and morose and seemed to take no interest in anything that was going on. Lawrence thought it best not to press him for his reason in acting as he did, and went on the scout without him.

On the evening of the fifth, Lawrence came in with the word that Van Dorn was rapidly advancing, and that a battle could not be delayed more than a day or two.

After Lawrence had made his report he went to hunt up Guilford. He found him sitting alone in his tent, silent and brooding.

“There is going to be a big battle,” said Law-

rence. "It will be fought within the next day or two."

"I know it," replied Guilford. "That is what kept me. When you went on your scout I had fully made up my mind not to be here when you came back, but, Lawrence, I could not leave you that way. I will stay until after the battle, and then, if I do not fall, you and I must part."

Lawrence tenderly placed his hand on his shoulder saying in a voice trembling with emotion, "Guilford, you and I have worked together for a long time. I do not see how I can give you up. I have no brother, you have become one to me. Will you not confide in me and tell me what is troubling you?"

Guilford remained silent for a moment, then said, "Yes, I will tell you; it is your due, and it will be for the best. You know when I left my father's house, it was with the full intention that the name of Guilford Craig should be dead and buried. In a weak moment I consented to come with you, for I loved you. You were the only link which bound me to the past. You promised to shield my identity, and you have kept that promise.

"Through no fault of yours, it has become known who I am. This army knows; the soldiers stare at me and gather around the tent to try and catch a glimpse of me. I hear them talking of the fellow

who fooled Frost, Price and Jackson. Before this time Price knows I am with Curtis; Benton knows it and before long my father will know it and curse me anew.

“After this battle, if I survive, Charles Morris will disappear as completely as I hoped Guilford Craig would. No one, not even you, will know where I am or what name I bear. Do n't try to persuade me differently, Lawrence, my friend, for it will do no good, and only make it harder for me to go.”

Lawrence was deeply moved. “Guilford, I will not try to detain you,” he answered huskily, “but to have you lost, buried as it were, not to know whether you are living or dead — it's terrible. Promise me that in the years to come, if we are both living, you will let me know.”

“I cannot promise,” replied Guilford sadly. “Better leave it as it is. Forget me.”

“I never can forget you, Guilford. If you must go, all I can say is, may God go with you.”

There in the darkness, with the clouds of the coming battle hanging over them they clasped hands, each too full of remembrances of the past to say more.

Sigel's division occupied an advance position near Bentonville, some twelve miles in front of the main army. When it became known that Van Dorn was

advancing, Curtis sent word to Sigel to move that night at eleven and fall back to the main army.

But Sigel was always slow to obey orders and liked to have his own way, and fight as independently as possible. So instead of moving at eleven he did not move until two o'clock in the morning, and then stopped with six hundred of his men in Bentonville.

During the forenoon the enemy swarmed into Bentonville by the thousands. Sigel now commenced one of his masterly retreats. Sometimes it looked as if Sigel put himself in a perilous position just to show how skilful he was in conducting a retreat. He certainly conducted this one with the skill of a master. Although beset by five times his number, he kept the enemy at bay, and slowly made his way toward the Union lines.

The sound of the conflict alarmed General Curtis and he sent a division to Sigel's relief. The division met Sigel nearly four miles from camp, fighting bravely but nearly surrounded. When the Confederates saw reinforcements had come, they sullenly fell back, and Sigel was left to continue his march in peace. He came in, took his place in line, and Curtis now had his whole army in hand for the coming battle.

General Curtis's position was strong; his men eager for the fight, and he was confident that he

could hold his own in spite of the force that Van Dorn was bringing against him. But during the night Lawrence brought startling tidings to the general. It was that Van Dorn, leaving his camp fires burning to deceive them, had divided his force. McCulloch and Pike were marching around to attack the right wing on flank and in rear; while Price with his Missourians was taking a road that would bring him squarely in the rear of the left wing.

Curtis could hardly believe the report; if true all his preparations for the battle had been in vain. The position which he had chosen with so much care would have to be given up. He could only hope that the report was not true, but when morning came his worst fears were realized.

The army was promptly about-faced and a position some distance in rear of the first was taken. Hardly was the new alignment made when the storm burst.

The battle opened on what was now the left of the army, by Osterhaus sending out a force of five hundred cavalry and a flying battery of three guns to try to locate the position of the enemy. This force suddenly ran on two regiments of Texas cavalry and three regiments of Indians of Pike's command. The Texans charged, scattered the cavalry and captured the guns.

The Indians went wild. They rushed to the can-

non, clambering over them, riding around them, yelling and whooping and brandishing their arms. All discipline was lost; orders could not be heard. In the midst of this rejoicing two shells from a Union battery fell in their midst. The effect was not only remarkable, but ludicrous. Shrieking with terror, the Indians fled back into the woods and from that time were of no more use in the battle than an army of women with brooms.

McCulloch's army was composed of what might be called veteran troops. They had been drilled for months, and great things were expected of them. Again and again were they hurled against the division of Davis and Osterhaus only to be sent reeling back, bleeding and torn. Both McCulloch and McIntosh, the second in command, were killed, and the third in command, Colonel Herbert, taken prisoner. This left General Albert Pike in command, and he was worse than no commander. In fact it appears he was never nearer to the battlefield than where the flying battery had been taken.

Without officers McCulloch's army fell back in confusion and fled from the field. So great was the panic that of the thousands in McCulloch's and Pike's army, only three thousand could be rallied when night came.

The battle in this part of the field was practically over by three o'clock: but on the right it raged with

fury. Here the Missourians under Price struck Carr's division and they fought with the greatest courage and gallantry. Carr was pressed back until he had lost over half a mile of ground, and he sent to Curtis saying he must have reinforcement, or he would be compelled to leave the field.

The general had but few to send. He turned to Lawrence, "Will you go with your Scouts?" he asked.

"I will," replied Lawrence. As he rode away the general shouted after him, "Tell Carr to persevere, and I will send reinforcements as soon as possible."

Lawrence gave the message to Carr, and then plunged into the thickest of the fight. Carr did persevere and after one-fourth of his men had fallen, reinforcements came, and the field was saved.

Night came and the weary soldiers sank down where they had fought. General Curtis was full of hope. The Confederate left had been crushed, and although Price had gained ground, he believed the force of his attack had been spent, and that victory awaited the Union forces in the morning.

All the Union officers did not feel so, however. General Asboth wrote to Curtis as late as two o'clock in the morning, advising him to mass his forces and cut his way through the Confederate army, and thus save as many of his own army as possible. It was advice that was never followed. The soldiers were

as full of fight as ever and anxiously awaited the coming of another day.

During the night and morning General Curtis brought over the divisions of Sigel and Asboth from the left; and when all was ready the entire army moved forward. The advance was irresistible; nothing could stay the ardor of the Union troops. Over hill, through valley and up mountain side they rushed.

By eleven o'clock the field was won, and the Confederate army was in utter rout. They fled in every direction and did not stop until they were forty miles away.

So great was the demoralization that one regiment of five hundred men, threw their arms in a ravine and then each man lit out for himself. These arms were afterwards found by the Union cavalry. So great a victory over so superior force was seldom achieved during the war.*

The gallant Army of the Southwest had met and

*For the number engaged the battle of Pea Ridge was not nearly as bloody as most of the great battles of the war. General Curtis fought the battle with a force of 10,000 men, and of these he lost nearly 1,400, or about 14 per cent. General Carr's and General Jeff. C. Davis's divisions suffered the most. A few regiments sustained heavy losses. The Ninth Iowa lost 218; the Fourth Iowa 164; the Thirty-Seventh Illinois 137; and the Thirty-Fifth Illinois 113.

The exact strength and loss of the Confederate army will never be known. In all probability Van Dorn had nearly or quite 25,000 men at or near the battle; but thousands of these

conquered their foe. Wilson Creek and Lexington were at last avenged.

During this battle the Scouts added to their laurels. In the pursuit of the fleeing army they were foremost; especially did Guilford Craig distinguish himself. He appeared devoid of fear and at times actually seemed to court death.

At one time during the pursuit a company of Confederates under a gallant officer made a most determined stand. Lawrence charged them, and in the *mêlée* he came face to face with the officer in command. To his surprise it was Randolph Hamilton. Instead of engaging in mortal combat, both raised their swords in salute and parted.

Just then Benton Shelley at the head of a company came charging down, and the Scouts were forced back. The charge brought Benton face to face with Guilford. When he recognized him a look of hate and of triumph came over his face, and he dashed at him revolver in hand.

men, especially the Indians, proved absolutely worthless in the fight.

Van Dorn made two reports. In his first report he says he took 16,000 men into the fight, and lost from 800 to 1,000, in killed and wounded. In his second report, made a few days after the first, he says he fought the battle with 14,000 and that his loss was only 600 killed and wounded. It seems incredible that an army of 14,000 men would flee in utter rout from a battlefield in which they had suffered a loss of only six hundred. The Southern soldiers were not made of such material.



Benton fired, aiming squarely at his breast. "At last, traitor — at last!" he said

Every chamber in Guilford's revolver was empty, but he disdained to fly from his enemy and prepared to meet him sword in hand. When within a few feet of Guilford, Benton fired, aiming squarely at his breast.

"At last, traitor! At last!" he cried.

Guilford's sword fell from his hand; he sank down in his saddle, then slowly fell forward and rolled from his horse.

But the Scouts had been reinforced, and the Confederates were put to flight. Lawrence did not know that Guilford had fallen and kept up the pursuit, until night.

On his return the news of Guilford's death was to him like receiving the stab of a sword. The next morning early he went to look for the body, but it could not be found.

With the hope that after all Guilford might have been wounded and not killed, Lawrence began a search of the hospitals, but not a trace of him was discovered.

As Guilford was not in uniform, it was thought that he might have been buried as a Confederate and was resting in an unknown grave.

All believed this except Lawrence. He still indulged in a faint hope that Guilford might not be dead, but when one of his company told him that he saw Guilford after he was shot, and that he was

lying on the ground, inert and motionless, his breast covered with blood, and as dead as any man he ever saw, even Lawrence had to give up and mourn him as dead.

CHAPTER XXIII

AFTER THE BATTLE

ALTHOUGH Lawrence's search for Guilford among the wounded was without result, he met with a pleasant surprise. In a Confederate hospital, where many of the more severely wounded had been left, he thought he saw a familiar figure. As he came nearer he saw he was not mistaken.

"Doctor Goodnow, as I live," he cried, rushing forward with extended hand. "I am glad to see you."

The doctor straightened up from the wounded man over whom he was bending, a smile came over his good-natured face, but he exclaimed roughly, "Glad to see me, eh? Well, I'm not glad to see you. I am here against my own free will and volition."

This, however, did not prevent the doctor from grasping Lawrence's hand and nearly wringing it off. When the doctor had sufficient leisure, Lawrence introduced him to the officers of the army and told the story of how he had defended his father

and himself from a Missouri mob, and he was received with open arms. His droll manner, even his rough speech, made him a favorite, and when at the end of two weeks he was exchanged, it was with sincere regrets that they saw him go.

The battle of Pea Ridge brought great changes to both armies. It ended for nearly two years the efforts of General Price to wrest Missouri from the hands of the Federals. Price was appointed a major general in the Confederate army; but in spite of his frantic appeals, of all the thousands who had rallied to his standard, but six thousand could be induced to enter the Confederate service. The rest preferred to stay at home and become guerrillas, bushwhackers or independent rangers.

The six thousand who did enlist were the flower of Price's army. Believing in the righteousness of the cause for which they fought, but scorning to become guerillas or bushwhackers, they entered the regular Confederate service, and well and bravely did they serve.

The Missouri brigade was soon removed east of the Mississippi, and there its flags floated on many a bloody field among the bravest of the brave. No troops in the Confederate service gave up more, sacrificed more, than that lone Missouri brigade. Far from home, knowing that their State was being devastated by friend and foe alike, they remained

true to the last, and it was not until the last hope was gone, and the last shot fired that they grounded arms.

The remnant of the brigade returned to ruined fields and wrecked homes. But with hearts as brave as when they met their foes, they went to work to build up the waste places. Those who had been their foes became their friends, and hand in hand they worked, making of Missouri one of the great States of the Union.

Great as the changes were that the battle of Pea Ridge brought to the Confederate army, it wrought fully as great in the Federal army.

The Scouts, which Lawrence commanded, had been acting as State troops under a commission by Fremont. Those of the band who had been regular enlisted soldiers were ordered back to their regiments, and the "Lyon's Scouts" like Fremont's famous body guard, became a thing of the past. Lawrence did not try to reorganize the Scouts, his heart was too sad over the loss of Guilford. He felt that without him, he could never make another company become what the old one was.

Harry Semans and Bruno returned to Missouri, and in the guerilla warfare which still continued to curse the State and which grew more bitter with the years, we may hear of them again.

Dan Sherman refused to leave Lawrence.

"Where you go, there will I go," he said, and Lawrence was glad, for with Dan gone it would seem to him that everything connecting him with the past was gone.

Lawrence, too, was transferred to other fields, and in the great campaigns which resulted in the opening of the Mississippi, he bore a most honorable part.

THE END

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO